

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM:

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A potential initiative (one sentence)

- Progressive Pathways allow individuals to alternate between and combine periods of education/training and employment, and thereby progressively build toward college and career success over an extended period of time.
- **How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative**
 - Through a combination of both learning and work opportunities Progressive Pathways can lead to both career advancement and eventual college degree completion. Examples of ProPath opportunities may include apprenticeships (e.g., part of a trade, financial services) or credential and certificate programs (e.g., nurse certification). This takes into account the realities of financial resources, career readiness, and understanding of career pathways for all individuals. It also promotes the concept of equity by elevating multiple forms of postsecondary success to a level playing field by removing the “college for all” mentality from the forefront. College is a critical piece of progressive pathways, but it puts it in context of helping a young person achieve their ultimate goals and desires over the timeline that best suits them.
- **And as it pertains to this initiative:**
 - **What is happening today that we need to keep**
 - Nearly 25 private workforce development and education foundations/funders joined to form the Progressive Pathways Fund at the Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance, which is housed at the Chicago Community Trust. Working with public institutions like state agencies, City Colleges of Chicago and Chicago Public Schools, the Pro Path Fund seeks to promote and expand the universe of transparent and accessible Progressive Pathways to Post-Secondary Success. To that end, the Pro Path Fund has outlined three initial objectives:
 - **Collect Accurate & Actionable Data:** We want all young adults in Cook County have access to accurate, and actionable information about ProPath opportunities and programs available to them. To do this, we need to take inventory of all of the existing ProPath opportunities and programs available in the county. We then need to standardize the way each is described. An initial list of ProPath programs and opportunities has been collected and their program descriptions have been standardized. By Spring 2019, the key partners will begin sharing new ProPath opportunities and programs using a standardized set of descriptors. These opportunities will then automatically feed into the shared list.

- **Create Shared Platforms, Technology and Tools:** We want to build the infrastructure to search for quality ProPath opportunities and programs. To do this, we need to take the list of ProPath programs gathered as a part of objective 1 and organize them in a user-friendly way. We expect that infrastructure may take many forms – e.g., stand-alone repository, API that integrates into existing systems, etc. Eventually these efforts will enable counselors, coaches, guides at practitioner organizations and youth themselves to search for quality ProPath opportunities. An audit of platforms and key elements of functionality has been conducted. By Summer 2019, the group will decide how and where to build the infrastructure to search for quality ProPath opportunities and programs.
- **Establish Quality Guidance:** We want young adults in Cook County who are transitioning out of high school (or its equivalent) to receive high-quality, comprehensive career guidance about multiple pathways. To do this, we need to train counselors, coaches and all adults who may interact with youth in quality guidance practices that include knowledge of quality propath opportunities. A set of trainings and training materials are currently being piloted by Chicago Public School school counselors (as part of the Chicago College & Career Advising Credential). The training will be available for practitioners beginning in Winter 2019.

- What we need to implement in the next 100 days
 - Continued movement on the development and coordination of multiple state agencies who filter funding to the various progressive pathway programs. There is no single public funder in this space, therefore continued coordination and signaling to state agencies that this is a priority is necessary. Additionally, continuing to prioritize the development within Chicago Public Schools of competencies that are aligned with the Chicago College and Career Advisory Curriculum throughout the districtg.
- What we can plan for longer-term implementation
 - Continued development of quality guidance for all of Chicago's young people and a mindset shift that we will look to quality postsecondary pathways as the dominant metric for success.
- What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative
 - Historically, there has been little knowledge of how to guide young adults towards quality ProPath opportunities. Information available is often incomplete, out-of-date and not helpful for decision-making. Guidance is predicated on “college for all” and thus not inclusive of a range of options; guides are underprepared for providing comprehensive guidance on postsecondary options.
 - Traditionally foundations have worked in either the workforce development or education space. In an effort to highlight the critical intersection between these two priorities, the work of the Pro Path Fund has deepened the connection and collaboration among philanthropic institutions.

For more information, please visit: <https://bit.ly/2VNUj9X>



Submitted by: Aimée Eubanks Davis, Founder/CEO, Braven

Transition Committee: Education

Objective: Ensuring all students have access to quality postsecondary options that enable them to live and thrive in Chicago.

Proposal: Launch a Talent and Economic Development Strategy that empowers Chicago's "Mighty Middle" to work and thrive while also ensuring our employers are inclusive, equitable and diverse and our higher education system includes students' career success as part of their focus.

Context: In America, we've promised that hard work and ambition will be met with equality of opportunity. The reality is that we have a quiet crisis on our hands. A bachelor's degree holder from a low-income background will start their career earning only two-thirds as much as those from higher-income backgrounds.ⁱ While education has the potential to be the great equalizer, today, only 25% of the 1.2 million first-generation or low-income college enrollees each year will land a **strong job** after graduation and be on a path to the American Dream as defined by Raj Chetty (out earning your parents by age 30). Strong jobs are worthy of their degree, meaning the job requires a bachelor's degree, offers a mix of health and economic benefits through 401ks or the equivalent, and promotion pathways.

In Chicago 6-year college graduation rates at top receiving institutions for CPS students have risenⁱⁱ but most still have their work ahead of them. While encouraging, the reality for too many of our students is that college isn't translating into economic success. Braven has coined this group--**students from a low-income, underrepresented and/or first-generation college background who have worked their way to and through four-year colleges and earned the right to compete**--"The Mighty Middle" as they have significant challenges accessing jobs worthy of their degrees yet are often overlooked in workforce development. The field includes a range of approaches and populations (i.e. Opportunity Youth, Apprenticeships, Upskilling) and should include the Mighty Middle.

This broken talent pipeline can be fixed. At Braven, our expertise lies with empowering the Mighty Middle so this memo outlines a Talent and Economic Development strategy focused on them. This strategy will transform Chicago's economy into a more robust, equitable, and inclusive place to work while ensuring tens of thousands of young people from Chicago's Mighty Middle achieve the American Dream. The strategy calls for a public/private investment of resources and a collaborative, streamlined approach amongst institutions of higher education (IHEs), employers and students.

A Talent and Economic Development Strategy for Chicago's Mighty Middle includes several components. The first two provide the Mighty Middle with access to career accelerating experiences and the last offers an opportunity to scale innovative solutions. Please note the following definitions apply throughout the memo unless otherwise noted:

Eligible IHEs: Four-year IHEs in Chicago zip codes whose student populations include at least 30% low-income students from Chicago zip codes.

Mighty Middle: Students enrolled or graduates of an IHE who have a low-income background, are a first-generation college student or graduate, **or** are a low-income under-represented minority.

Low-income: Students who receive or graduates who received Pell or MAP funding to attend 4-year IHEs.

1. ***Incentivize Employers to Hire the Mighty Middle:*** Offer tax incentives to employers who hire Chicago's Mighty Middle for strong jobs and internships. Promotion of this program could begin in the next 100 days with the opportunity to receive tax incentives per the appropriate Fiscal Year.
 - a. ***Tax Incentive:*** Inspired by Newark Mayor Ras Baraka's policyⁱⁱⁱ, employers could earn graduated tax incentives if a tiered percentage of their annual, new, strong entry-level jobs or strong internships are filled by Chicago's Mighty Middle.
 - b. ***Student Eligibility for Internships:*** A student would be eligible to participate/apply for the program if they are from the Mighty Middle and are currently enrolled in an eligible IHE or are transferring into one of those schools.
 - c. ***Qualified Entry-Level Strong Jobs:*** A hire would qualify if the person graduated within the last 12 months from an eligible IHE and is from the Mighty Middle.
 - d. ***Strong Job Definition:*** Strong jobs a) require a 4-year degree; b) are full time; c) include a mix of health and wealth benefits; and d) offer promotion pathways.
 - e. ***Strong Internship:*** A strong internship includes at least 30 paid hours a week during the summer or 20 paid hours a week during a semester and are resume-building.
2. ***Empower the Mighty Middle for Strong College to Career Transitions:*** Build upon One Summer Chicago and Summer Fast Track programs by incorporating a new Mighty Middle college to career transition track into Summer Fast Track that also connects with One Summer Chicago. Students could take a rigorous, career-accelerating, credit-bearing college course while also completing a summer internship through One Summer Chicago. The City, IHEs, Philanthropy and Employers would all contribute financially, and the timeline is one year.
 - a. ***Eligible students:*** A student would be eligible to apply for the program if they are: 1) currently enrolled or transferring into an eligible IHE; 2) in good academic standing; and 3) from the Mighty Middle.
 - b. ***Eligible entities:*** Eligible IHEs could apply to offer a course with or without an external provider with a track record around career success for similar students.
 - c. ***Eligible Courses:*** In recognition of students' investment of time and need to earn credit, IHEs (with or without partners) would offer rigorous courses that: a) are credit-bearing at their IHE; b) have an established record that participation is associated with post-graduate career outcomes; and c) engage employers.
3. ***Create an Innovation Fund focused on Results:*** The City would create a Higher Education & Workforce Development Innovation Fund to scale solutions that ensure thousands of Chicago's Mighty Middle work and thrive in Chicago. The fund would set career success goals and allow nonprofits, IHEs and/or for-profit companies to propose innovative solutions to achieve the goals. Non-profits and IHEs would be eligible to apply for matching grants and for-profit employers could propose their own tax incentives. A request for proposals could be issued within the first 100 days if funding was in place. Inspired by other innovation funds (i.e. Obama Administration's i3 program or NYC's Opportunity program) the key parameters of the program would include:
 - a. ***Transformational + Evidence informed:*** The intersection of evidence level and scale would determine applicant's eligibility for tiered funding levels.
 - b. ***Transparent and accountable:*** The process would incorporate transparency and accountability at each stage. (i.e. successful applications, successful grantees' goals and their progress to goals would all be published regularly on the City's website.)
 - c. ***Eligible entities:*** Nonprofits and Eligible IHEs can apply for the grant program and employers with Chicago zip codes can apply for proposed tax incentives.

ⁱ Brookings Institution.

ⁱⁱ <https://toandthrough.uchicago.edu/data-insights>

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.nj.com/essex/2017/01/newark_businesses_that_hire_local_residents_will_g.html

Memo

Name: Dr. Ana Gil Garcia, Full Professor, Northeastern Illinois University

Transition Committee: Education

Prompt: Leadership Parity

A potential Initiative: CPS Latino Leadership Parity

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:

The new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative *by increasing the number of Latino education professionals in any level of CPS administration and creating the leadership parity much needed in a city in which the Latino population became the first majority among minorities in September 17, 2017.*

To clarify the point, for example, on August 16, 2018, the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) via an internal communication emailed to all CPS employees and with the following subject line: “Introducing New Network Leaders”, announced the creation of four new networks (14, 15, 16 and 17) “to provide support for high schools so that they can achieve CPS’ vision of all students graduating ready for success in college, career, and civic life.” While we Latinos applauded the expansion of the network system so that more opportunities, resources, and support may be provided to increase and maintain the quality of education for all students, we saw serious concerns. The same email listed the eight newly hired or reassigned Network Chiefs of Schools for the current 2018-19 school year. To our dismay, none of the new leaders were Latino. The issue of equity has been ignored. According to the CPS website (public information) Latinos comprise 49% of the CPS student enrollment. However, Latinos are underrepresented in CPS’s workforce, comprising only 21% of teachers and 16% of principals and Network Chiefs of Schools. In fact, the latest update of the CPS website (April, 2019) shows that African Americans represent the largest number of school administrators in CPS system (43.8%) followed by Whites (35%).

Latino educators urge you to address the disproportionate Latino representation in CPS leadership. The absence of Latinos in leadership is detrimental to the quality of education and sends the wrong message to 49% of CPS students. We demand leadership parity and equity for Latino educational professionals. We are ready and willing to work with you to find ways to ensure that Latino candidates are given fair consideration.

And as it pertains to this initiative:

What is happening today that we need to keep:

In terms of leadership parity, there is nothing to keep. The situation needs to improve in order to ensure that Latino leadership parity in education, equity issues (resources and funding), and increase of services and resources for English Learners and Latinos become a reality.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days:

To intentionally identify the number of Latino properly qualified candidates in the CPS system that would help decrease the deficit causing disruption and discrimination in the schools. Rules and regulations on the CPS demands from principals favor African Americans and Whites teachers and principals. For example, there is a large number of bilingual Latino teachers with principal certifications currently teaching in K-12 classrooms. It is an imperative that CPS shows data about these certified personnel and take actions to incorporate them to the administrative level of CPS system. There are CPS regulations such as the CPS eligibility process for principals that has negatively affected the advancement of Latino educators certified and endorsed as school administrators in the city of Chicago. Latino school leaders are fleeing the system and moving to the school districts in the suburbs where those additional challenges and obstacles do not exist.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation:

Partnerships with higher education institutions as well as Chicago Education Fund will be necessary to intervene in order to ensure that principal preparation programs for Latinos are intentionally created to fix the shortage of bilingual Spanish teachers and school leaders. Higher education institutions, classified as Hispanic Serving Institutions federally, may need the support from CPS high rank administrators to ensure that the potential graduates from the programs will be hired by the system once they graduate.

Secondly, Latino educational professional organizations must be invited to the table of discussion and negotiations on any issues related to bilingual and Latino teacher and school administrators' shortage and disproportionate representation. There are many important Latino organizations such as MALDEF, ILACHE, LULAC, IALAS, NHAE, IAMME among others, willing to work with CPS about these critical issues of leadership parity and equity.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative:

- Access to reliable data from ISBE and CPS
- Unwillingness to speak clearly about the issue of leadership disparity existent in CPS system
- CPS School Board opposing to changes that imply reversing rules that are refraining the growth of Latino school administrators in CPS

Memo Template

Name: Anita Andrews Hutchinson of Child Care Advocates United
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Transition Committee: Education Transition Team

Prompt: Please pick one objective to focus your memo on from among the objectives that were shared with you on your invitation letter. To advance that objective summarize in 2 pages:

- **A potential initiative:** To delay both the expansion of Universal Preschool in Chicago Public Schools and the RFP process for the Chicago Early Learning Community-Based Programs requested out of the Department of Family and Support Services and extend existing Delegate Agency contracts to allow for more time to strategically and comprehensively retool the RFP to ensure equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion in the landscape of early childhood education in light of statewide Universal Preschool.
- **How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:**
 - The Lightfoot Administration has a great opportunity to implement Universal Preschool in one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country in a conscientious and effective manner by reviewing the implementation process to ensure parity.
 - Should the existing plan move forward as it exists, there will be a slow hemorrhage of community based providers in the city that will eventually bleed out completely. This would disproportionately affect providers who are committed to serving low-income children. Consequently, the Lightfoot Administration would be responsible for the closure of hundreds of Black and Latino owned businesses, mostly owned by women, who have historically served as community anchors..
 - It is suggested that there is a temporary scale back of expansion in schools to ensure equal access of Preschool For All slots in both CBOs and public schools.
- **And as it pertains to this initiative:**
 - **What is happening today that we need to keep:**
 - Universal Preschool is an initiative that was rolled out by the Rham Administration. Community based organizations believe this is an excellent initiative that needs to be more thoughtfully designed with all stakeholders at the table so it is true to the spirit of being “universal.”
 - There is trend data available through the Illinois Department of Human Services that shows that there has been a drastic exodus of children out

of community based care into classrooms operated by public schools. Families are not making the decision to move their children out of existing centers because of quality, they are doing so because the alternative public system is free.

- Unfortunately the public school programs are not required to be compliant with the standards required by community based organizations and some programs are not as high quality as centers. For instance, many CPS preschool programs do not have extended days to accommodate the needs of working families, wrap around services that children and families need, or even closely accessible toilets or sinks.
- Universal Preschool needs to be equitably expanded as a priority. Previous to this administration, CBOs were in partnership with the public school system to implement high quality early childhood education and instead of being in direct competition with the city.

- **What we need to implement in the next 100 days**

- During the next 100 days the rollout of the existing Chicago Early Learning Community-Based Programs RFP needs to be delayed.
- During this delay, it is suggested that Stakeholder Committees are convened to engage in conversation with the objective of retooling the RFP to ensure equity in its implementation. As it reads now, many institutions will be set up for failure.

- **What we can plan for longer-term implementation**

- By engaging more stakeholders in re-writing of the RFP, it will ensure that as external trends manifest (i.e. Statewide Universal Preschool and minimum wage increases) the program has solvency not only for itself and the businesses & organizations that implement; but also and most importantly, for the children and families it is designed to benefit.
- When New York City expanded universal preschool rapidly, it decimated community based organizations creating a crisis in the implementation of the program. The City of Chicago should avoid this pitfall.

- **What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative**

- In order for this initiative to be successful, it would be critical that existing contracts to delegate agencies were extended for at least six months at current funding levels. This would ensure that there is not a loss of services to children and families.
- Additionally, the RFP retooling project will need to consider more realistic salary mandates once all factors are considered and implemented (i.e. increased reimbursement rates for all applicable blended/braided funding sources, reconsideration on CCRR current support model, etc.).



Memo

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot and the Education Transition Team

From: Illinois Network of Charter Schools

Date: April 17, 2019

The objective that we are focusing on is:

Ensuring all students have access to the quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success

Family-friendly Schools

Initiative: Chicago Public Schools will create a measure of family satisfaction, identify schools that are truly family friendly, and develop a series of opportunities for those schools to showcase what they are doing and share best practices.

In a city that tracks many measures of our schools - test scores, attendance, demographics and many others - shouldn't we measure how well the schools are serving all families? Family - friendly schools would be an initiative of identifying the family friendliest schools, schools that embrace families of every configuration, from every community and with every need.

To ensure equity, the initiative should start with schools serving predominantly students from low income families. We know that many northside schools have strong family support as is evidenced by the robust "Friends of" fundraising organizations that have been created. This initiative should focus first on underinvested communities.

Phase 1

CPS has data to help identify which schools are doing the best work engaging families. This is an area that most school leaders genuinely care about but often lack the time, the staff and the resources to devote to this endeavor. CPS could utilize existing metrics such as the 5 Essentials Survey and self-reported report card pick-up data to begin but should seek to add more wholistic metrics. To create full inclusion, CPS could set up a series of focus groups at schools to learn firsthand how included families feel at their schools. Questions to delve into include:

- Do you feel welcome when you come to the school?
- Is your family structure respected and acknowledged?
- Do you understand your child's progress based on report cards and other communications?
- Does the school help you to support the learning happening in the classroom?
- When you attend school events, do you feel included and valued?

- Are the extracurricular programming/parent events relevant to you and your children?

Right away, the new administration could assemble a Family-Friendly School Working Group to:

1. Identify the measures of a friendly school.
2. Review the existing data on measures of family satisfaction.
3. Make recommendations for how the district should share with families what to expect from their schools.

Phase 2

After 100 days, the administration could roll its identified attributes of Family Friendly Schools and a list of exemplars, determined both by data and by the Working Group. We believe that charter schools may be identified as some of the schools where families are prioritized.

Charters are uniquely situated to share their work in this area because, since their inception in 1997, they have had to approach families and communities as customers and continually evolve to meet their needs. This initiative could elevate the great work that both charter and district schools are doing related to family engagement and may have the additional benefit of promoting more good will between the two types of public schools.

The attributes of Family Friendly schools will include the typical programming that people think of related to parent engagement. Many charter and district schools have traditions such as an annual Thanksgiving Feast for families, monthly pizza night, 8th grade parent support during the GoCPS application process, and other important activities. There will be schools that have developed strong family communication protocols as well as robust family welcoming procedures. This thoughtful and high impact work should be shared.

Another measure of diversity and inclusion is how schools use language related to families. School communications that focus on “parents” neglect the many children that don’t live with their mother or father. Schools forms should acknowledge all family structures and be simple to fill out for everyone. In addition, daddy/daughter dances and events that only celebrate one family structure or gender identify can be expanded to support all families and students.

Phase 3

Finally this important work can be incorporated into many aspects of school operations at the district, from principal training and support to family training to more targeted communications to families, to truly transform the experience that families have with their children’s school. By highlighting and celebrating the great work of family friendly schools, the administration can acknowledge the value and importance of families to school and student success.

Sharing out what is working could happen in a variety of way to ensure that schools doing the best work in this area are able to showcase their practices to a larger audience. This could involve professional development, the creation of steering committee and school visits.

The major challenge to efforts in this area is that there are those who do not see family engagement as linked to student achievement outcomes; the new administration has the unique opportunity to challenge this assumption.



Golden Apple

Golden Apple Foundation
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goldenapple.org

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot
From: Alan Mather, President - The Golden Apple Foundation
Objective: Expanding Quality Teachers

In an effort to ensure that all students have highly effective teachers, the Golden Apple Foundation, the Chicago Public Schools (CPS), and the City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) should collaborate to build a stronger pipeline of talented and diverse future teachers to teach in the Chicago Public Schools. Golden Apple already has a strong partnership with the Chicago Public Schools and is building a partnership with the City Colleges of Chicago.

Currently, there are programs on which we can build: CPS has a partnership with Golden Apple where we prepare and place scholars in Chicago schools-of-need with a particular focus on CPS' Opportunity Schools, the district's most difficult to staff schools. Throughout Illinois, Golden Apple has a strong, diverse pipeline of almost 700 high potential undergraduates who are preparing to teach in schools-of-need.

Concurrently, CPS has a handful of schools that have a Career Technical Education (CTE) Teaching Pipeline. Although these programs are too limited at present, the intention of these programs is to jump-start the preparation of young people into either early childhood education or the more general "Teaching" pathway. In the last two years, the Chicago Public Schools has done more to build CTE programs in an effort to increase the pipeline. And, they have begun to work with CCC to build in more Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment opportunities for students to expedite their pathway toward teaching.

CPS has engaged important partnerships to address the teacher shortage but those programs must grow exponentially to deliver meaningful impact. According to the 2018 Report from ISBE: "Teach Illinois: Strong Teachers, Strong Classrooms," there were 1407 teaching vacancies in the State of Illinois last year, and 40% of those were in the Chicago Public Schools. The report also noted that a drastic decline in enrollment at Colleges of Education is further compounding the problem. "Between 2010 and 2016, the number of candidates enrolling in and completing teacher preparation programs [in Illinois] decreased by 53 percentage points." Thus, if Chicago aims to address its own teacher shortage where teachers are needed the most, we must collectively and urgently grow the pipeline of young people who are interested in becoming teachers.

Additionally, while our school population continues to become more diverse, the last decade has seen a decline of teachers of color entering the profession. Golden Apple aims to be a material solution to this problem -- as over half of our Scholar population comes from diverse backgrounds - but we must grow to support CPS. Since 82% of our Golden Apple Scholars who begin teaching complete at least five years teaching in schools-of-need in Illinois, we have a retention rate that far outpaces that of state and national benchmarks.

In the next 100 days, three things must happen:

1. A branded campaign to elevate the experience of teaching in CPS should be created and implemented successfully to engage the next generation of teachers in a meaningful career that can make a difference in the lives of thousands. This should be a collaborative effort between CPS and all of its primary Teacher Pipeline partners - a TEACH CHICAGO initiative similar to that being done in Detroit.
2. Expand recruitment programs and intentional career pathway efforts within Chicago Public high schools, such as those that exist at Robert Lindblom and Gwendolyn Brooks, to further increase the pipeline of prospective teachers who understand the impact young people can have in their communities and the city.
3. Engage master teachers, such as those honored by Golden Apple, to create a meaningful curriculum to ensure that students are benefitting from a rich ecosystem of teacher preparation that is already a significant producer of quality and diverse teachers to the system.

The Chicago Public Schools are rich with Golden Apple talent, from the award-winning teachers to Scholars in their first five years of teaching and beyond - a number that totals nearly 500.

Master teachers awarded by Golden Apple are engaged in the preparation of our next generation of teachers - Golden Apple Scholars - by providing curricular design, instructional support, reflection, and mentorship throughout the undergraduate and early teaching experience.

Golden Apple does not work in a silo; instead, we pair our award-winning teachers with highly credible partners in critical areas such as Trauma-informed Preparation, Personalized Learning, and Civics Engagement to ensure that the depth of preparation for aspiring teachers matches the ultimate needs of the students these preparing teachers will eventually serve.

Overall, opportunities are being seized on a limited basis which should be brought to scale. Intense collaboration among partners is required to accomplish the goals of meeting the need with an ample, well-qualified, and diverse teaching supply. On their own, each institution has challenges in building an effective pipeline, but, together, we can make a significant difference for the future of our youth in Chicago Public Schools.

Mayor Elect Lightfoot Policy Memo

Teach For America Chicago-Northwest Indiana

Context on Teach For America: Teach For America is a network of leaders transforming the education landscape in Chicago and Northwest Indiana in order to ensure that one day all students have access to an excellent education. We recruit and develop promising young leaders to teach in low-income schools for at least two years, then support their impact throughout their career, both within and outside of the education system. By 2020, our network of teachers, school leaders, and advocates will impact one-third of the population of public schools in Chicago.

Objective Alignment: Ensuring all students have access to the quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on a path to success.

Initiative: To ensure that *every* child can be on a path to success, we believe our school systems need to reimagine their work with diverse learners (e.g. special education), and invest in teacher recruitment, teacher retention, and school leader quality.

While there are a number of equity issues we considered focusing upon for the content of our memo, in our experience, diverse learners have historically been given the least opportunities relative to their needs. Our memo is broken down into three talent-related focus areas given our mission, expertise, and belief that talent is the most important area to tackle with diverse learners. We also believe it is important to acknowledge that talent solutions alone will not be sufficient.

Focus Area #1 - Teacher Recruitment: Chicago is facing a severe shortage of special education teachers, and in order to see real change in our special education supports and services, we need to strengthen our talent pipelines. First, we need to incentivize teacher candidates to explore special education certification. This will require improving the working conditions of special education teachers and considering financial incentives to teach in a historically hard-to-staff content area. Second, given that traditional teacher preparation programs produce the vast majority of teacher candidates each year, Chicago school systems need to identify mutually beneficial partnerships with programs to increase the quantity and quality of special education supports. Finally, additional investments should be made in alternative pathways to teacher certification. For example, Chicago Public Schools is partnering with the Relay Graduate School of Education and National Louis University on residency models, but the scale of both programs is insufficient relative to the problem.

At Teach For America, we aspire to be a part of the solution with nearly 40% of our incoming cohort this past year serving as special education teachers. Nearly two-thirds of our current corps shares the backgrounds of their students and they lead their students to an average of 1.5 years of academic progress per school year. Given that we are also laser-focused on quality, we ground in research that

shows that alternative pathway teachers are at least as capable as traditional pathway teachers, often more so. Research also shows that these programs attract a more diverse pool of prospective educators than traditional programs typically do.

Focus Area #2 - Teacher Retention: We need to retain more of our special education teachers in the field. First, we need to make the role of a special education teacher more sustainable. Currently, special education teachers are expected to work as full-time educators and manage caseloads of students. Often, school administrators see these positions as “flexible,” meaning they are the first to be asked to substitute teach when there is a need, so special education teachers cannot focus on their caseload and execute IEPs. Put simply, special education teachers need to be able to dedicate their full attention to their students. Second, we need to strengthen our special education training for educators. Our special education teachers share that the training they receive is often considered supplementary development and not essential to their roles. Finally, as many general education teachers have students with diverse learning styles in their classrooms, it’s important that *all* educators receive special education training. Currently, not enough teachers are properly trained, making it difficult for them to provide the necessary academic and social emotional support to students. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that all the adults interacting with our diverse learning students are able to support their development.

Focus Area #3 - School Leadership: At Teach For America, we have over 260 school leaders in our region. We have seen firsthand the tremendous impact that a strong principal can have on a school, and know that like teachers, they have an essential role to play in reimagining special education. First, principals can work to ensure that they have consistent data to track student progress. Teachers have shared that systems often change year-to-year, and that best practices for data are rarely shared across the district. This challenge is especially acute for diverse learners, as without consistent, standardized data, it’s difficult to measure the effectiveness of specific initiatives or curricula. Second, principals should consider how they can build their schedules around the needs of diverse learners. Students receiving these supports have the most logically challenging schedules, but often the schedules for special education teachers are layered on after the general education teachers. To address this, schools should be encouraged to reimagine how they approach their schedules, and successful practices should be shared across the district. Finally, we believe it’s important that schools have the necessary administrative capacity (e.g. case managers) to support the needs of diverse learners in the school building. Often, schools will “cut” these positions due to budgetary constraints, diverting resources from a population of students that need them the most.

In order to see the sort of changes we’ve outlined above, incredible leadership will be needed at every level of the education system. We believe that lasting change takes bold, grounded leaders working together, inside and outside of schools, fighting for the aspirations of children and their families. Chicago Public Schools strength is its people, and if we are able to support them and make their work sustainable, we have no doubt our progress will continue.

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We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act; but a habit.
Aristotle

Name: Antoinette Taylor

Transition Committee: 2019 Education Transition Committee

Date: 4-17-19

Prompt: Education Objectives and Initiatives of Focus

Close the opportunity gap for all of Chicago's children, accelerating the path to an equitable world-class system of public schools, and ensuring all of our students can thrive.

- Objective 1: Ensure all students have access to the quality early childhood experiences they need to enter kindergarten ready to learn.
- Objective 2: Ensure all students have access to the quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success.
- Objective 3: Ensure all students have access to quality postsecondary options that enable them to live and thrive in Chicago.

Objective: Objectives 1-3 apply because there are approximately 50,000 students with a documented disability currently enrolled in Chicago Public Schools that span grades Pre/k – Grade 12. This number, however, is likely higher than 50,000. The federal laws of IDEIA and The Rehabilitation Act, suggest that SEAs and LEAs are also accountable for recognizing and responding to what they should have known about the students in their care. Therefore, the true number of the above-mentioned students includes but is not limited to those with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), 504 Plan, within the referral and evaluation process and those whose services have been erroneously delayed or denied.

- **A potential Initiative:** District-wide Diverse Learner policies, protocols and practices.
- **How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative.** The new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation by strategically and intentionally focusing on students with disabilities also known by District 299 as Diverse Learners at every level of Mayor-elect Lightford's 15-point plan to transform Chicago Public Schools (Lightford, 2019). This is particularly important at point 6, because students that have been impacted by trauma or mental health concerns may have a 504 Plan if the trauma or mental health has adversely affected their ability to access the general curriculum.
- And as it pertains to this initiative:
 - **What is happening today that we need to keep:** The Plan to Transform Chicago Public Schools (Lightford, 2019) mentions support for diverse learners and their families as its 13th point. Within this

section there are several points mentioned that can be found in references 33 - 36. This is a good start for the incoming administration to address current concerns while simultaneously creating the capacity to put systems in place that support the full fifteen-point plan.

- **What we need to implement in the next 100 days:** A thorough review by the incoming administration of the district's current policies, protocols and practices that relate to serving students per the mandates and guidance of IDEIA, The Rehabilitation Act, Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois School Code. Keeping in mind that both aforementioned federal laws are grounded in students with disabilities having equal access to the general curriculum, the thorough review should go beyond the Office of Diverse Learners and Student Supports. In fact, solely focusing on what happens in that office, creates the possibility that all root causes of disparity and problematic practices in this regard are not discovered and therefore not addressed. Some of the practices that have led to concerns about processes that delay or deny access to the general curriculum are initiated and implemented across the district, outside of the office of Diverse Learners and Student Supports. Within the next 100 days identifying these practices is crucial as this will set the foundation for the 19-20 academic year and beyond.
- **What we can plan for longer-term implementation:** Sustainability of system-wide, whole child, whole school and whole community policies, protocols and practices should be the long-term implementation plan. There is much that can be used to initiate and inform what needs to change, be maintained or slightly adjusted by reviewing existing federal, state and local information that is disbursed such as data from the federal Results Driven Accountability (RDA) Initiative and the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC). Additionally, the Illinois State Board of Education's State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) should be thoroughly reviewed and used to inform local practices.
- **What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative:** The greatest challenge is responding and resolving to formal complaints that have been filed in a way that does not appear to be reactionary, while simultaneously putting trustworthy, sustainable and practical district-wide systems in place that promote student achievement, support for teachers and increase family and community engagement in this regard.



Logan Square Neighborhood Association

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From: Nancy Aardema, executive director, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, naardema@lsna.net
Bridget Murphy, director, Parent Engagement Institute, LSNA bmurphy@lsna.net

Transition Committee: Education

Re: Scaling Up the Parent Mentor Program



Date: April 17, 2019

It is urgent for the Lightfoot Administration to restore trust with parents; to prioritize neighborhood schools in communities of color; to dramatically increase individual, caring support for struggling students; and to imagine schools as true centers of community where families can shape solutions on safety, immigration, housing, wellness, and more. We support a Sustainable Community School vision for CPS.

An important ingredient for this vision, and a through-line for all these goals above, can be found in our own backyard: The Parent Mentor Program.

The Parent Mentor Program started at one school in Logan Square in 1995. ***Today, every morning across Chicago, 600 dedicated parent mentors, most of whom are Latina and Black moms, take their kids to school and then step into a classroom to volunteer for 2 hours.*** The Parent Mentor Program is now rooted in **75 CPS neighborhood schools**, working in deep partnership with 14 community-based organizations. The Parent Engagement Institute, based at Logan Square Neighborhood Association and Southwest Organizing Project, has a strong track record of scaling this model **so we can build the grassroots parent leadership we need to address the equity gaps in our schools and neighborhoods.**

With a \$1M initial investment, and a commitment to increase that investment by \$1M per year if shared benchmarks are met, we can sustainably scale up the Parent Mentor Program over the next four years.

Within the first 100 days, we could open and complete a community-driven RFP process and announce the 25 additional schools and new partner organizations before the school year begins.

We would then start the 2019-2020 school year with 100 Parent Mentor Schools in CPS – firmly establishing Chicago as THE national model for long-term, asset-based parent leadership in schools and planting the seeds for the grassroots leadership it will take to meaningfully address equity and inclusion in our city.

Within one term, Chicago would have Parent Mentor Programs in at **least HALF of the 302 CPS neighborhood elementary schools that are 75%+ free/reduced lunch.** With this commitment,



we would:

- Expand to an additional 25 high-poverty neighborhood schools per year – bringing the district-wide total to 100 schools next year and at least 175 in 4 years.
- Increase individual support for 18,000 low-income students in FY20 and over 32,000 students in 4 years – concentrating on Pre-K through 2nd Grade classrooms in low-income neighborhood schools -- **that means the majority of low-income early childhood students would have a community role model in their classroom by 2023.**
- Build capacity for the 14 current community organization partners and add more community organizations to the Parent Mentor Network.
- Train an additional 200 parent mentors per year – bringing the total to 800 parent mentors to work in CPS classrooms 2 hours/day next year and 1,400 parent mentors in 4 years.
- Provide daily classroom support to 200 additional teachers – 800 CPS teachers total in FY20 and 1,400 teachers in 4 years.

Challenges

We cannot sustainably start a Parent Mentor Program in every school overnight. The model works best when there is a real partnership between the school and the community organization, and when the program is run by trusted grassroots parent leaders. These relationships take time, but they are what it takes for real change.

The Parent Mentor Program is not a magic bullet solution. We support a Sustainable Community School vision for CPS. However, we also argue that there is no such thing as a solution that does not involve building real parent and community leadership. **That a tested, scaled parent leadership model is a homegrown Chicago tradition is an asset to be recognized and celebrated.**



What is the Parent Mentor Program?

Community-based organizations partner with their local schools to recruit, interview, and train a cohort of at least 8 parent mentors. Parent mentors help fill persistent equity gaps in their children's schools by committing to volunteer in classrooms 2 hours/day. From this immersive classroom experience -- supported by weekly workshops on instructional practices and community organizing -- the Parent Mentor Program cultivates a strong cohort of leaders at each partner school. Parent mentors support each other to pursue their personal dreams and unite to address community issues that impact their families. Parent mentors receive a modest stipend after 100 hours to value their commitment.

The Parent Engagement Institute at Logan Square Neighborhood Association and Southwest Organizing Project provide the training, coaching, and curriculum.

To date, funding for the current 75 CPS Parent Mentor Programs comes from ISBE, IDHS (workforce development), 21st Century, Sustainable Community Schools, school contributions, and private foundations.



Birth through Graduation: Set the Stage for Students' Success in Chicago

Initiative:

Use intentional reflection and analysis of implementation of Chicago's rapid Pre-K rollout to allow for a more thoughtful approach to integrating the full spectrum of early childhood education (from birth to eight) with our current K-12 system.

Initiative Description:

Birth through Graduation's guiding vision is that all stages of Chicago's educational system must be strong and united so that all students and all families are supported and can be successful. The guiding principle lies with the coordination, consultation, and communication surrounding the implementation of the Universal Pre-K Program. We, as Teach Plus Teacher Leaders and current CPS teachers, want to build on the momentum around expanding access to Early Childhood Education while ensuring that any expansion embraces equity and ensures that all students, regards of ability, race, income and/or community have equal access to high-quality curriculum and resources. Our initiative supports the need for a clear and connected alignment process from the Early Childhood and K-12 systems, improving upon the current rollout of Universal Pre-K to ensure that it will have the transformative effect on students and families that the city needs and desires. It is vital that all educators work hand in hand to build trust through transparency as we are "better together."

This initiative supports the following values by:

- **Equity:** Ensures that all students have equitable access not only to programs but also to curriculum that is aligned to the developmental needs of children birth through 12th grade;
- **Transparency:** Provides clear updates and publishes feedback from stakeholders during the implementation phases;
- **Accountability:** Measures success by using observational assessments such as KIDS and Teaching Strategies Gold; tracks success in finding certified teachers with a goal of not expanding beyond our capacity to appropriately staff the expansion;
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Focuses on support for a mixed delivery method of early childhood education because the current ECE center- and home-based providers are more diverse than the current CPS teaching staff;
- **Transformation:** Transforms the current rollout of free Pre-K to create a true Birth to Graduation support system in Chicago.

What is happening today that we need to keep:

We need to maintain the momentum to expand access to high-quality early childhood education options, but build on it in a way that integrates all components of the system. We must continue to prioritize a mixed delivery system in which resources are distributed fairly to home childcare providers, community-based organizations, and Chicago Public Schools. We need to continue to support families to find options for young children that meet their needs, recognizing that many working parents will need childcare beyond the hours that can be provided through school-based Pre-K. Ensuring the preservation of early intervention and

wrap-around supports is crucial to ensuring access to educational opportunities for all students. It is important to continue to develop initiatives to recruit and retain high-quality teachers for every child in every early childhood setting.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days:

CPS has already rolled out applications to expand Pre-K into targeted areas of the city, and it would be damaging to the district's reputation and to families that are relying on these services to disrupt this plan. However, because many providers and advocates have raised concerns about the effects of this expansion on community-based organizations, the city needs a clear system for gathering feedback from all stakeholders during the first year of implementation. This feedback system needs to track not only students served by district-run Pre-K, but the effects of this expansion on the community-based organizations and family child care providers in these communities. We must prioritize implementing expansion in a way that carefully considers both the opportunities and the risks of expansion.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation:

We must ensure that the foundations of our youngest learners' school journeys are strong and that each subsequent level builds congruously on the one before it. To do so, we need to elevate the educator quality, training, standards, and compensation for the infants and toddlers in the areas where Pre-K is expanding, and do so by leveraging and strengthening the current mixed delivery system in place. We need to ensure that developmentally appropriate practices are being used at each age level of our city's system. We need a heavier focus on building capacity during the first three years of life and a recalibration of Kindergarten to ensure that it is developmentally appropriate.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative:

- Earmarking funds that would increase the capacity to substantially fund birth to three programs.
- Difference in qualifications and credentials needed for practitioners who work with infants and toddlers.
- Raising the level of awareness to the citizens of Chicago about the value of the first three years of a child's development and its connection to K-12 education. If a child does not receive a quality early childhood experience it is nearly impossible for them to catch up once they are behind.
- Disconnect between child care providers and the public school system.

Authors (* Denotes Lead Author):

*Sabrina Alexander, NBCT, Thomas Hoyne Fine Arts Elementary
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*Heather Duncan, NBCT, Director of Early Learning, Oak Park

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Jim Staros, King College Prep



Transition Committee: Education

Objective: Ensuring all students have access to the quality early childhood experiences they need to enter kindergarten ready to learn.

Initiative: Fostering quality early childhood experiences via trauma prevention policies

Trauma in Early Childhood Affects Brain Development

To paraphrase the Harvard Center on the Developing Child, Chicago's future depends on its ability to foster the healthy development of the next generation. Chicago's success rests on the success of its youngest residents, and for them to be successful we must invest in their development by investing in safe, nurturing, and supportive families, neighborhoods, and community institutions.

In their earliest years, young children's brains are hard at work creating and strengthening the architecture that will support their development and psychosocial health for the rest of their lives. Experiencing trauma in these early years can influence not only how many and which synapses grow strong, such as those involved in a child's fight or flight response, it can also affect gene expression. Stress and trauma in young children's lives can impact their ability to self-regulate and manage stress and conflict later, can quicken the aging process, and can trigger negative mental and physical health effects in young adulthood and beyond.

To avoid these threats to a child's well-being and future success, services and policies should focus on preventing and mitigating the negative effects of trauma on young children. Since a child's well-being is connected directly to their relationships with their families, caregivers, and communities and the functioning of those adults, we must invest in the functioning of families and caregivers in a community and provide them with resources to form positive, caring relationships with children.

Maintain and Strengthen Support for Early Care and Education

The positive adult-child relationships formed in high-quality early care and education, including home visiting, provide a protective factor for children experiencing or at risk of experiencing trauma. The city's current focus on access to high-quality services, especially for children most at risk of experiencing trauma, should be maintained through continued and strengthened layering of funding streams at the city level.

The Lightfoot administration should maintain existing support for high-quality early childhood educators who are well trained in the science of child development and how to provide responsive, therapeutic, developmentally appropriate caregiving. Critically, existing efforts to support educators who represent the communities in which they serve should be maintained, including early childhood educator scholarships, an initiative supporting men of color in early care and education, and articulation partnerships and cohorts supporting higher education for current educators working in communities.

Implement a Decision Framework for Trauma Prevention

To holistically support prevention and mitigation of child trauma and improve outcomes for children and families, the Lightfoot administration should implement a decision framework to assess the impact of policies on positive relationships between young children and adults in their families and communities.



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Policies should be designed to strengthen family and caregiver relationships and should avoid damaging or threatening these relationships. *The administration should ask: to what extent do current policies and operations promote or hinder responsive relationships between adults and young children and promote or hinder child development? To what extent do they diminish or increase sources of stress for families? How might proposed policies promote or hinder responsive relationships and child development and diminish or increase sources of stress for families?*¹ Throughout the administration, this framework can be infused into all levels of decision-making in education and beyond to support positive relationships and outcomes for children, families, and the city.

More immediately, the Lightfoot administration should *implement recent recommendations to improve early childhood educator compensation and benefits*, including ensuring that early childhood settings have access to the public resources necessary to provide educators with adequate compensation and benefits alongside strong professional development. These recommendations promote educator stability and well-being and reduce turnover, supporting educators' relationships not only with the children for whom they care at work but also with their own families.¹ The high returns on investment for early care and education described in evaluations of model programs are built through investments in strong professionals and strong settings that can support them.

The Lightfoot administration should also *use this framework when deciding where and how to invest in early care and education services*. Data can support identification of communities that have currently and historically experienced both the greatest barriers to access to high-quality services as well as the greatest rates of child trauma; indeed, historical policies of have too often been the perpetrators and instigators of marginalizing conditions that can create traumatic experiences for children. In addition, ongoing conversations with community members can provide insight into which services are most needed by a community and how families can best access services provided. For instance, some families in some communities may desire greater levels of off-hours care, more hands-on wrap-around services, programs with a stronger emphasis on executive function skills or two-generation models, or a greater share of community- and home-based care.

Finally, the Lightfoot administration should begin work to establish fundamental policies that can support family stability necessary to foster positive adult-child relationships and promote positive outcomes for children. These include *paid parental leave, financial supports policies such as a municipal Earned Income Tax Credit, centralized access and eligibility to public benefits, greater access to community mental health clinics that support trauma mitigation, and jobs training and living wage employment opportunities to support predictable work scheduling and stable earnings*.

Potential Challenges in Execution

With a finite budget and broad fiscal concerns, greater and more targeted investments in promoting and strengthening adult-child relationships can be at odds with dramatic expansion of access to services citywide. However, investing in targeted, high-quality services for those living in communities that have historically been marginalized or in which the city has under-invested will reap a more powerful outcome for individual community members and for the city as a whole.

¹ Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, 2017. *3 Principles to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families*. https://46y5eh11fhgw3ve3ytpwxt9r-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/HCDC_3PrinciplesPolicyPractice.pdf.



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Name: Sara R. Shaw*

Transition Committee: **Education**

Initiative: ***Reform the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) capital resource allocation process to improve equity and transparency.***

Problem statement

In a district of CPS' size, resources frequently feel constrained, and school communities grapple to ensure that students receive what they deserve. Capital needs, which are often very visible and have a direct impact on learning environments, create some of the greatest angst. Yet capital needs in CPS are currently addressed without a transparent logic behind their treatment and without a commitment from the district to prioritize the equitable treatment of students in decision-making. Such commitment could be expressed explicitly in public communications around capital needs and/or implicitly through the criteria used to determine the treatment of capital needs. Neither is currently the case. As an illustrative example, the [2018 Facilities Master Plan](#) includes the word "equity" once in 212 pages and generally considers impact on communities from a bureaucratic analytical perspective rather than also considering areas of historical (dis)investments, demographics or outcomes, or community voice.

The consequences of these twin deficiencies of transparency and commitment to equity are twofold. First, the public struggles to hold the district accountable for the significant dollar amounts spent on capital needs. There is no way to evaluate the equity of the process by which resource allocations are made, and it takes intensive external efforts to evaluate the equity of their end results. Second, not building equity into the process predictably proves to yield inequitable results and, as importantly, results perceived by the public as inequitable. The 2013 school closings are perhaps the most deeply felt example in Chicago today, but the [2016 WBEZ analysis](#) of CPS school construction allocations and the 2018 Capital Plan Hearing transcripts shows that deleterious effects on whole communities continue. The WBEZ analysis lays out the stakes in stark terms: how the district currently treats its capital needs exacerbates segregation, deprives non-white students of resources and opportunities, and meanwhile drives up the district's debt and interest payments in the face of a ballooning pension liability. The district literally cannot afford to treat its capital needs without the highest level of intentionality, which must be grounded in the new administration's core values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation.

Solutions

An initiative seeking to improve both the transparency and the equity of the capital resource allocation process should include the following short-term and long-term solutions for CPS:

Short term

- ***Conduct an immediate audit of the slate of current and upcoming capital projects*** to flag whether the slate as a whole or any individual projects are imminently positioned to create harm or exacerbate inequity. This audit may take the form of an abbreviated Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) that applies basic questions of intent and impact through both internal analysis and external engagement with the communities implicated in the slate of projects. Summary results of this audit should be made public.
- ***Convene an advisory group of stakeholders to partner with CPS to improve transparency and***

* This memo is informed by experience at the Illinois State Board of Education, as a Local School Council member, and as a Chicago United for Equity Racial Equity Fellow, but it does not represent official views of any entity, nor is it written on their behalf.

equity in the resource allocation process. Members of this advisory group should be sourced both democratically through an open call and from established organizations, and ultimately selected to best represent the diversity of stakeholders most impacted by capital needs decisions: principals, teachers, parents, and community members. Schools and communities that have been disproportionately negatively affected by past capital needs decisions should have significant representation within the advisory group. CPS should facilitate this advisory group meaningfully from a set of shared core values and guiding principles in order to solicit group members' best thinking. As a result of engagement, CPS shall incorporate advisory group recommendations directly into district decision-making. One measure of the advisory group's success will be group members' confidence in communicating and affirming the district's decisions back to their home communities.

- **Begin job-embedded equity trainings** for CPS leaders and staff engaged with capital needs decisions. These trainings should educate participants on core concepts of equity and invite reflection on applying those concepts to daily work. As a result of the trainings, participants should be positioned to adopt equity frameworks and tools within their work, take ownership of the equity implications of their work, and proactively identify opportunities to embed equity in their work.

Long term

- Build upon the job-embedded equity trainings to **integrate REIAs into the daily work of CPS leaders and staff engaged with capital needs decisions.** These REIAs should become part of the district's ongoing engagement with its advisory group, be made public prior to any final capital needs decisions, and be reflected in the transparent communication of the capital resource allocation process. For maximum impact, the REIAs should engage not only the advisory group and the broader Chicago community but also CPS departments not traditionally affiliated with capital needs decisions. When a district's financial staff are aligned with its teaching and learning staff, it can plan more holistically and better reinforce the same core values across the district.
- **Update the Capital Improvement Plan and Educational Facilities Master Plan to explicitly lead with equity.** "Leading with equity" does not mean tacking on an equity dimension to the existing Plans but rather means re-evaluating and re-framing the Plans to prioritize equity. The updated Plans may spotlight community voices, overlay projected investments with analyses of historic disinvestment, and/or discuss capital needs alongside community and student needs. Ideally, this step would be a short-term step, since versions of both Plans are already published. In order to make these updates meaningful, however, the short-term steps listed above are likely prerequisites.
- **Adapt best practices developed through capital needs process improvements to other district resource allocation processes.** The district controls the resource flow of not solely capital dollars but also a vast array of personnel and non-personnel allocations. Each resource allocation process deserves similar examination to ensure that the district is upholding transparency and equity throughout the system.

Considerations

While undertaking these reforms to the capital resource allocation process, the administration must grapple with two major challenges. The first is strictly financial: capital needs projects demand significant investments, and CPS is not in a position to make any significant investment decisions lightly until a sustainable long-term solution to the pension crisis is implemented. So long as the district continues to accrue an unchecked pension liability, even the most equitable and transparent resource allocation process will strain to be successful because of resource constraints and tradeoffs led not by core values but by pension realities.

Second, discussions of resource allocation – especially in the resource-constrained environment such as that created by the pension crisis – rarely end with every constituent or community feeling that their needs have been fully satisfied. The difficult and necessary responsibility of a city executive is to make decisions for the good of the whole city. The reforms above will give more assurance that these decisions truly are "for the good," supported by deep analysis and community leadership. Resource allocation decisions and communications should ultimately reflect the administration's core values and thereby act as a mechanism for building public trust even in the face of competing public interests.



Opportunity. Community. Impact.

To:

Education Transition Committee, on Behalf of Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

From:

Barbara A. Lumpkin, Interim President and CEO

Stephanie Schmitz Bechteler, VP and Executive Director, Research and Policy Center

Seville Spearman, Program Manager, Center for Student Development

On behalf of the Chicago Urban League

RE:

Initiative Proposal: "Preparing Middle School Students for High School Success"

For years, the Chicago Urban League has provided enriching, supportive services to African American students on the South Side of Chicago. Staff with the Center for Student Development deliver high-quality, supplemental programming to middle school and high school students in partnership with local neighborhood and charter schools. We work closely with parents, students, school administrators, school counselors and teachers to develop programs that align with one of the key goals you have set for your work: **provide students with access to quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success.**

We believe that postsecondary and career success begins well before our students enter their first college classroom. Many of our partner institutions have made great strides in expanding early childhood and kindergarten learning opportunities, recognizing these early years are critical foundation years. We agree, but experience has shown us that the formative "tween" years – as students age into middle school and early adolescence – are just as critical a development point for our students.

Much research has been done on what is termed the "young adolescent learner," including developmental and learning characteristics unique to this age. This is a period of time in which students first begin really understanding themselves and their place in the world. They begin to develop a stronger sense of abstract thinking, and begin to ask the "what if" questions that will guide the decisions they will make in upcoming years. Emotionally, this can be a confusing and tumultuous time, as they begin to balance competing demands from peers, parents and other adults. Academically, this is the period when students begin building their capacity for deep thinking and connecting their academic world to their world outside of the classroom.

We have spent considerable time working with students in grades 6-8. We have seen our students rapidly undergo the changes listed above during the relatively short 3 years they work with us as middle school students. We also know that upon graduation, they will be entering the even larger and more complex world of high school. Researchers have stressed the importance of 9th Grade as a marker for how a student will perform during the remainder of their high school years. The metric most used, entitled the *Freshman On-Track Indicator*, recognizes that students maintaining good attendance and not receiving an "F" grade in any of the core subjects during their freshman year are

on a good track to graduate from high school. We argue that the foundation for this first, most critical year, is built through preparatory work done with students in middle school. Helping a struggling student in their freshman year is triage work. We need preventative work. [It is for this reason that we believe it is essential that District 299 develops Middle School transitional planning for all 6-8 grade students.](#)

Our proposed initiative is twofold, including both group and individual components. We believe that all middle school students should be provided with basic life skills education and training during their school day – one that emphasizes socioemotional development, healthy living, responsible decision-making and conflict resolution skills. We recognize that school administrators are understandably reluctant to extend the responsibilities of their teachers and support staff to include this kind of group-based youth development work in a sufficient, consistent manner. Indeed, teachers should be allowed to focus on their required academics and counselors on the unique counseling needs of the student body. Stronger partnerships between schools and community-based organizations can help provide the financial and human resources to execute this programming. School administrators would need to commit the space, time and access to school personnel for these activities (ideally during the school day), and community-based organizations would bring to bear staff, supplies and financial resources to develop and implement the programming.

The second component of this work would be the development of Middle School to High School transition plans, that would allow counselors to work one-on-one with middle school students to help them begin the process of uncovering their interests, strengths, secondary and post-secondary plans. This type of planning often exists for students with IEPs, but we are proposing that this is a needed and necessary service for all middle school students as they prepare to enter the large and sometimes confusing high school landscape in District 299. We envision that this plan would follow the student to their high school of choice, where the high school counselor would be able to pick up the reigns from the elementary school counselor.

In the short-term, implementation would involve strengthening our increasing school-community partnerships to help outside organizations provide the life skills education and training to students. School administrators would also need to determine when and how this type of programming would fit into an already full school day. Counselor roles may also have to be reevaluated to determine if and how the Middle School Transition planning would be best incorporated into existing duties and responsibilities. In the longer term, additional funding would be needed to scale out the program to full capacity, which would require a prioritization of funds for these purposes.

Support for the overall idea of this initiative would likely be high, as parents, teachers and administrators could likely be convinced of the value of this work. One of the biggest challenges likely to be cited would be budgetary constraints. Principals have to make very careful decisions about where their funds are allocated, and they may struggle to hire the appropriate level of counselors, or may not be able to restructure the counselors' positions to incorporate the needed number of one-on-one meetings. If available, funding used to support socioemotional learning initiatives could be used to offset the cost. It would be helpful to examine the District's process and funding for the postsecondary transition plans required for graduating high school seniors (Learn. Plan.Succeed) to see if that model can be translated to what we are proposing here.

We eagerly look forward to the possibilities for educational reform under Mayor-elect Lightfoot's administration. We have great hope for our African American students, families and communities. We want to do everything we can to help them succeed, and we hope you join us in this mission.

Memo

Name: Cynthia C. Nambo

Transition Committee: Education

Objective 2: Ensuring all students have access to the quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success

To advance this objective consider this initiative: Align resources (fiscal and human capital) across all schools based on sustainable and equitable practices.

To infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:

Implement an independent equity task force to work with the Office of Equity to 1) analyze current fiscal & human capital & performance metrics 2) convene stakeholders and 3) construct a multi year plan to implement structural and sustainable infrastructure for equity (race, gender, etc) over 1, 3, 5, 10 years.

o What is happening today that we need to keep

- Office of Equity must continue to be a part of the district offices & help define district priorities.
- Continue recruitment and training efforts for Pre K educators.
- Continue to allocate resources to dual language education in Pre K programs for English Learners and other students of color including the Seal of Biliteracy
- Unpacking the right actionable data to inform sustainable equitable decisions even if its difficult to look at that data
- Keep using the UChicago Consortium on School Research (Consortium) and data rooted in equity.
 - Continue using Foundations for Young Adult Success out of the Consortium.
 - Use their reports on fiscal and school supports to principals and schools.
- Continue to direct resources for innovative (equity based) programming; and allocating funding to schools with lowering enrollments.
- Maintain a funding formula that does not penalize schools for losing students until an equitable funding formula is enacted (transition plan).

o What we need to implement in the next 100 days

- Convene a transitional equity task force that will transition to a long term task force.
- Mandate black & brown studies Pre-K to 12 and give resources to fund it.
- Analyze data and funding practices to date with an equity lense in schools & city communities.
- Initiate a listening campaign with community members, community organizations, principals, assistant principals, teachers, counselors, students, and community organizers.
- Synthesize information from listening campaign and communicate it to the stakeholders for accuracy.
- Conduct a resource & data analysis of supports, accountability measures, and funding using these questions: Who is currently being served well by these structures? Who is not being served well?

- Study how inequity structures are already embedded in the education system and the city system i.e. many counselors are black or brown whereas Instructional Leadership Teams often lack people of color as members in predominantly black & Latinx schools. And funding aligns to this dynamic as well and must change.
- Give schools a resource line of funding and human capital to do recruitment & enrollment strategies to free up admin and teachers and counselors to focus on quality instruction. They need to start planning now/yesterday for the next few years enrollment and instructional strategy.

○ ***What we can plan for longer-term implementation***

- Multi year plan to make all schools regardless of neighborhood or community (race, socio economic) a high quality school without divisive competitive strategies.
 - Better funding formula that make ALL schools viable & high quality than what is provided by current property taxes and allocation of TIFs. Implying a comprehensive city revitalization plan based in equity.
 - Create accountability measures that do not sustain destructive competition (SQRP) by making resources scarce. The community surrounding the school dictates its enrollment, therefore funding possibilities or obstacles in communities where students' communities have been or are being displaced. The accountability structures create an endless "starving" daunting structure where schools are scrambling for resources, funding, and high quality teachers to manifest miracles of success vs structures for success. This accountability system does not rely on district structures to carry the burden. The school, students, and communities continue to carry the burden of failure.
 - Instead offer more resources, supports & equitable accountability to schools that are facing lower enrollments especially because of city displacement practices.
- Multi-Year recruitment and explicit support strategy of administrators of color; male teachers of color (Latinx & black) that are viable in ANY school including selective enrollment schools.
- Hire Latinx executives at the district leadership level to reflect the Latinx population that is reaching over 60%.
- Revitalization efforts instead of gentrification efforts across the city and its communities as the main generator of fiscal support and enrollment viability for neighborhood schools. Hire educators from our schools' neighborhoods.
- Multi-Year plan to provide Equity trainings for educators, counselors, administration, LSCs, etc.

○ ***What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative***

- Racism and racist structures that are implicit. Keep looking at in a way that shows who is being served well and who is not being served well by our city.
- Initially there will be mistrust. Stay the course to prove efforts are honest and will sustain over time.
- There is a perceived division of money & equity. Align resources continuously to equity practices.
- Keep steady through the conflict, learn from the conflict, make the conflict generative. Consider key people getting trained on how to navigate conflict to see its worth and not resort to divisive tactics, isolation, and have outside facilitators to keep conflict generative.
- This is deep adaptive work. We will want to go technical and fix problems that may only continue status quo. Take the time to unpack the real data; for authentic sustainable movement toward equity of success.

Name: Cosette Nazon-Wilburn

Transition Committee: Education

Objective 2: Ensure all students have access to the quality school, teachers and support they need to graduate from high school on the path to success.

Initiative: Grow access to a sustainable, high-quality after-school program in neighborhood schools

Due to the alarming rate of youth impacted by trauma, young people need enriching youth development opportunities that build resiliency and help them to explore their interests and grow into highly-skilled, creative, and well-rounded adults. After-school programs which focus on restorative practice and enrichment activities can provide innovative, fun, and educational activities for students which give them with the soft skills necessary for college and career preparation.

To infuse values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity, and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative, the new administration can have open meetings where community members and stakeholders are able to provide feedback.

As it pertains to this initiative:

- We need to keep after-school hours for students, professional development programs for teachers and remaining open to innovative ways to support the potential for young people
- What is needed to implement in 100 days is to create a need assessment, provide professional development to teachers to get them on board, engage the help of parents, increase fundraising efforts with funders to bring more resources to the support after-school funding, expand opportunities for new providers to deliver services, and removed the barriers to entry.
- What we can plan for longer-term implementation is bringing corporations in to identify programs that increase skill sets needed for the workforce. Here is a [LINK](#) to a report which might be valuable.
- The challenges you might encounter in executing this initiative is funding and the disengagement of youth.

Leading with LUV...

Cosette

Christine A. Palmieri - Founder Chicago SpedPAC (Special Education Parent Advocacy Committee)
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chicagospedpac@gmail.com

April 16, 2019

Nikita Brar - Education Transition Committee

Dear Ms. Niketa Brar,

Thank you for inviting me to submit a memo to Mayor Elect Lori Lightfoot's Education Transition team. This memo is in regards to Special Education in Chicago Public Schools. We must ensure that all students with disabilities have access to a Free Appropriate Public Education, and continue to work towards equity and inclusion for all students with disabilities.

I am a part of the advocate group that requested a state investigation into CPS Special Education programming last year. Last November ISBE initiated an unprecedented Public Inquiry (<https://www.isbe.net/publicinquiry>) which resulted in the findings of systematic delays and denials leading to massive IDEA law violations within CPS. CPS Special Education is currently under ISBE state monitoring for the next three years as a part of corrective actions. CPS has over 50,000 students receiving special education supports and services. Many students were harmed by these violations and are now due compensatory supports.

I am proposing the creation of a full time Special Education Committee team through the Mayor's office. Below are just some outlined issues - both immediate and long term. This Special Education Committee could help bring CPS' special education program into compliance with IDEA through collaboration with current ISBE state monitoring. This committee's long term aim would be to provide all of Chicago's families with a Special Education program that is a **leader in the nation**.

Thank you, Christine Palmieri - Chicago SpedPAC

Mayor Lori Lightfoot's Special Education Committee Team Proposal - Current and Long term Concerns to be addressed

- CPS cut a minimum of \$40 million dollars from Special Education funding in our neighborhood schools since 2016. CPS special education programming requires an infusion of funding to restabilize.
<https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/ny/2019/02/08/de-blasio-proposing-300-million-to-hire-more-special-education-staff-beef-up-programs/>
- Creation of a Special Education Committee within Mayors office. Possibly an office of Special Education Ombudsman similar to this office within Washington DC
<https://sboe.dc.gov/page/office-of-the-ombudsman-for-public-education>
- Push for more support and staffing within the ISBE monitors office, through the Mayor's office, and CPS to support the ISBE Public Inquiry Corrective Actions. <https://www.isbe.net/publicinquiry>
- Place a moratorium on cuts to all local school Special Education positions for the next 3 years. Special education positions can be added as needed, but local schools will run with stable consistent staffing - which will allow schools to provide supports based on individual need and not current available resources. Current 2019/20 school budgets include many cuts to Special Ed teachers and Paraprofessional staffing
- CPS head of ODLSS has resigned. Allow CPS families and stakeholders to participate in the vetting of applicants for the new ODLSS chief.
- CPS must provide dedicated Special Education case managers in every school. Currently case managers are typically the school counselor, and have little to zero training in Special Education or understanding of Special education laws. With dedicated, trained case managers in each local school the need for higher salaried network level District Representatives and Special Education Administrators decreases.
- There is currently a nationwide Special Education teacher shortage. CPS has created a toxic working environment due to the violations, which has amplified this teacher shortage. Special Education teacher waivers should be reviewed and allow for candidates who live outside of city boundaries to teach within CPS. CPS retired teachers must be able to substitute for more than the current 100 days. CPS Paraprofessionals who leave a full time position must be able to enter the sub pool prior to the current 90 days. A system must be put in place to encourage applicants/substitutes to apply to under resourced schools.
- Provide continuum of supports and options for students both within CPS and out of district within the city proper. Reinstatement of Deaf and Vision Plus clusters
- There is currently a lack of collaboration with parent led special education organizations and local disability advocacy groups. Partnering with local and state advocacy groups is essential and must be encouraged
- CPS' current social worker ratio is 1 to 1,200, and is recommended at 1 to 250 for students living in high poverty or with trauma. CPS must provide a social worker in every school; and more where needed.
- Mandated Safety Care training for all special education teachers and paraprofessionals. Each school must have a trained crisis team. Mandatory trainings on FBA and BIP implementation.
- Appropriate Nursing staff at each local school. Many schools have no nurse. Seizure protocol in every school to address seizure and epileptic care
- Dyslexia early screenings and addressing dyslexia as a district wide initiative. Increased access to Wilson/OG training's for all Special Education and Early Education teachers
- Create programming for students with Autism similar to the NYU created NYC Public Schools ASD Nest program.
<https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/asdnest/>
- Increased supports and staffing within the CPS ABHST department (Autism) including staffing a minimum of one BCBA for each network
- Special Education Sexual Health Curriculum for students with disabilities. Creation of curriculums to be used both in Cluster programs and in inclusion settings. The Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health offers support in this area.
<https://www.icaah.org/>

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Communities United

To ensuring all students have access to the quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success, Communities United recommends two initiatives:

1. The Rethinking Safety Initiative, to increase resources for mental and behavioral health services inside of schools and reduce the reliance on school-based police over the next four years.
2. Transparency in capital spending, to ensure decision making process is thoughtful, transparent, and advances equity across the district.

In this transition period, the new administration has the opportunity to bring about a new vision of what safety looks like inside of schools, and make a commitment to addressing issues of school discipline through a trauma-informed and equitable lens.

For decades, the over-reliance on harsh discipline practices, including school-based arrests, resulted in the criminalization of generations of students of color, leaving entire school communities at the mercy of a criminal justice system with a legacy of systemic racism, while leaving untouched the root causes of misbehavior or other signs of trauma or depression.

Over the past several years CPS has taken steps to shift from punitive discipline practices and has slowly embraced restorative justice. Yet the necessary resources to provide school communities with full wrap-around support services has fallen short. Additionally, the investment in school-based health clinics has increased access to health services to students and community residents. We recognized this as a critical strategy to truly address trauma and violence in communities hardest hit by violence and crime.

Despite the small gains, CPS currently has one of the highest student to social worker ratios in the state. According to 2018-2019 CPS position roster data, there were only 468 social workers district wide. That puts CPS at a ratio of 772 to 1 social worker, far from the national recommendation of 250:1 ratio, or 1:50 for students with intensive needs. Additionally, CPS reported only 230 school psychologists district wide, or 1 psychologist for every 1,570 students, falling far behind from the national recommendation of one psychologist for every 700 students.

On the other hand, there has been a lack of transparency as to how CPS prioritizes capital improvements and new construction over the past years. For example, last year, CPS announced a \$1 billion capital investment plan that included the construction of new schools. At the same time a report by WBEZ showed that the district was in need of about \$6 billion in capital improvements. For many parents and students across the city, the construction of new schools amid a high need of repairs for existing schools is reflection of the lack of transparency on how decisions are made. Additionally, a report by UIC Voorhees Center showed large disparities in capital investments across the district, with some wealthier and predominantly white wards meeting or exceeding capital investment needs than wards that are predominantly Black and low-income.

Therefore, we recommend that over the first 100 days, the new administration commits to the following:

1. Establishing a task force composed of community stakeholders and intragovernmental departments to 1) identify where there are great health disparities both within and outside of schools, as well as where there are disparities in school-based arrests and other exclusionary practice; 2) develop short and long-term recommendations to address disparities.
2. To solve the shortage of social workers and school psychologists, the new administration must prioritize decreasing this gaps in services in the new 2019-2020 school budget.
3. Conduct a detail facilities needs assessment across the district (CPS has not conducted one since 2013). Develop a clear and transparent process, with community input, to prioritize capital investments with a clear mission to advance equity in the district.
4. A moratorium on the construction of new schools until existing needs are met.

We recognize that CPS's fiscal problems may pose challenges to addressing existing needs, but we also recognize that these fiscal problems stem from a long history of mismanagement, and corruption. As a new administration, stronger systems of transparency and accountability must be set in place to ensure that resources are spent in teaching, learning, and support services for all students.

TO: Education Transition Team Committee, Mayor-elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Erica Clark, director, Parents 4 Teachers

RE: Full collective bargaining rights for Chicago Public Schools teachers

PROBLEM: The Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) is the only teachers union in the state prohibited from bargaining over classroom conditions. This restriction unfairly hampers the union's ability to advocate for its students. This memo urges the Lightfoot administration to recognize full bargaining rights for Chicago teachers in ongoing contract talks.

INTRODUCTION

Founded in 2011, Parents 4 Teachers (P4T) is a city-wide parent group organized around the idea that the needs of teachers go hand-in-hand with the needs of our children and Chicago Public School (CPS) students. We believe in building unity with CPS teachers and solidarity for the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU). The union's platform is one that parents wholeheartedly endorse, as evidenced by numerous public opinion polls and the thousands of parents who rallied in support of teachers during the 2012 strike. Chicagoans, and CPS parents specifically, view the CTU favorably and believe the union is working in the best interest of students.

BACKGROUND

In 1995, at the only time in the last 40 years Republicans had total control over state government, the Illinois General Assembly passed a law that prohibits CTU—and only the CTU—from bargaining, and potentially striking, over issues that affect teaching and learning conditions in our schools. Teachers in every other Illinois school district—and at charter schools in Chicago—are allowed to bargain and, ultimately, strike over issues such as class size, staffing, school resources and student needs if the district refuses to adequately address those demands at the bargaining table.

But in Chicago, state law deems those subjects as “permissive...and within the sole discretion of the educational employer to decide to bargain.” [115 ILCS 5/4.5] Legislation to repeal Section 4.5 has passed the Illinois House and is pending in the state senate. But, regardless of legislative action, P4T believes it is critical for the incoming administration to award full collective bargaining rights to the CTU in its current contract negotiations. Our teachers shouldn't have to beg state lawmakers for rights that are awarded to every other unionized public school teacher in Illinois.

The current CTU/CPS contract expires June 30 and negotiations on a new contract are underway. The union has said it hopes a new agreement can be in place by the fall, but it is encouraging members to be ready to strike if that is not achieved. For the benefit of CPS students and their educators, we encourage the Lightfoot administration to adopt a more collegial, collaborative tone for the current negotiations than her predecessor. The teachers' contract proposals are reasonable, based on best practices, and have been developed by rank and file teachers in the trenches every day who know what their students need. The CTU proposals would improve both the working conditions for teachers and the learning conditions for Chicago students.

It may seem nonsensical to expect the administration to ignore the latitude given to it under Section 4.5, but a new approach would create a more productive collective bargaining process that is ultimately in the best interests of CPS students.

IMPACT OF SECTION 4.5

The conditions in CPS schools have deteriorated dramatically since passage of Section 4.5. Along with hampering educators' bargaining power, the law also gave total control of Chicago schools to the mayor, paved the way for school privatization and outsourcing, and allowed CPS to skip years of contributions to the teachers' pension fund.

The cost of that financial blunder has been well documented and is being borne by Chicago taxpayers. The cost of the bargaining restrictions on our schools and students also has been enormous, but less well documented.

For example, class sizes have exploded. While the current CTU/CPS collective bargaining agreement includes class size "guidelines," those guidelines are voluntary and CPS routinely violates them. P4T analyzed CPS class size data and found that, this year alone, 1,007 elementary school classrooms were in excess of the contract guidelines. Thirteen classrooms had more than 40 students in them, including a kindergarten class on the city's south side that had 40 students. How much learning is happening in a classroom of 40 six year olds, or 12 year olds, for that matter? [www.parents4teachers.net]

Thanks to weakened teacher rights, CPS staffing has declined to woeful levels. The district ranks second to last in terms of staffing ratios for the state [[Better Government Association](#)]. Schools lack full-time nurses and librarians and there is a critical shortage of social workers, counselors and psychologists. The CPS student to social worker ratio is 1 to 1,238 students, almost five times the recommended level, and the student to counselor ratio is 1 to 444 students, again, almost double the recommended ratio. [[Chicago Teachers Union](#)]

In Chicago's two recent charter school strikes, charter operators agreed to numerous improvements to teaching and learning conditions in their schools—class size limits, sanctuary school protections, additional counselor and social worker staffing—in order to settle those disputes. Charter teachers are members of the same CTU local as teachers in district-run schools, yet they have more collective bargaining power than their CPS peers. This is unacceptable.

CONCLUSION

A collective bargaining process is, by definition, an adversarial process, but the goal is to reach an agreement that benefits both parties. And the job of any union is to represent the best interests of its members. Parents understand that. But we are fortunate to have a teachers' union that also advocates for the best interests of our students. Parents appreciate that—it's why the CTU garners public support in all corners of the city.

The new administration can steer a new course for CPS by seriously and substantively addressing, at the bargaining table, the teachers' very real and legitimate concerns about conditions in CPS classrooms. Mayor-elect Lightfoot does not need—and should not wait for—a change in state law to do right by Chicago's students.



Memo Template

Name: Ebony Lucas

Transition Committee: **Education**

Prompt: After- School, Summer, and Co- Curricular Programs for Grades 7-12

Excellent public schools require access to opportunities that allow students to develop as productive members of society. Programmatically, Chicago Public Schools lack a comprehensive agenda that allows students to explore interests and inspires innovation and positive decision making during out of school hours. As a result, there are inequalities in programming that is offered across the district.

Over 25% of all violent crimes are committed by teens. The teenage years, when the brain is not fully developed, is a critical time to ensure that adequate programming is available. Yet, most Chicago park districts do not provide programs for youth over the age of 12. In addition, there is a huge disparity in access to programs during non-school hours. For example, during spring break, while some schools are providing 8th grade trips, college tours, and international experiences, many schools on the south and west sides offer no such opportunities. After School Matters and One Summer Chicago are great programs, applications require internet access and/ or ability to attend job interviews and job fairs downtown. Further, while some schools have competitive athletic teams in a variety of sports, many youth never have access to sports other than basketball, such as tennis, soccer, and baseball. Few Chicago Public Schools offer Model United Nations, chess, forensic science, competitive debate teams, instrumental music and arts.

The long term goal should be to ensure that every Chicago child between the age of 12-18 has an opportunity to participate in something productive over the summer, after school, and during breaks.

As we look to reduce crime and help all youth reach their full potential, we must provide access to After School Matters, One Summer Chicago, career and trade exploration, international exposure, college and career counseling, and college tour opportunities in all schools in every neighborhood. This is distinguished from the current model that requires parents and students to research and seek opportunities, often outside of their community, without guidance or proper resources.

There are opportunities throughout the city to create strategic partnerships with Chicago Park District, non-profit and business communities. The first 100 days should include building relationships to supplement in school instruction across existing city departments, organizations, and the businesses community to bring diverse opportunities in every neighborhood. A mechanism should be created to assist youth and parents in program enrollment to ensure issues such as lack of internet access or a computer do not create barriers for participation. Parent and principal surveys should be performed to determine existing programs, interest in additional programs, and barriers to participation.

Some of the challenges for this initiative will be working with schools that already have limited resources; ensuring that every school has an opportunity fair; and ensuring that opportunities are created within neighborhoods. Another challenge will be to ensure that youth have transportation to selected programs outside of their neighborhoods. It will be important to ensure that some programs are offered within schools to improve participation.

The short term goal should be a focused effort and assistance to those neighborhoods where youth crime has been an issue and providing support and resources to those schools that do not currently have these types of programs. Participation priority should be given to Chicago Public School students.

FORESIGHT LAW + POLICY

77 West Washington, Suite 1215
Chicago, IL 60602
Phone: 202.499.6996

April 16, 2019

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

From: Elliot Regenstein, Foresight Law + Policy (chair of the Illinois Longitudinal Data System Governing Board and the Illinois Early Learning Council's Data, Research, and Evaluation Sub-committee)

Transition Committee: Education

Objective: Ensuring all students have access to the quality early childhood experiences they need to enter kindergarten ready to learn

Initiative: Properly implementing the state's required [Kindergarten Individual Development Survey](#) (KIDS) assessment.

Infusing the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation: For too long low-income and minority children in kindergarten have come in to kindergarten behind – and even with CPS' nation-leading ability to produce student growth, the gaps at kindergarten entry have been too large to overcome. Mayor-Elect Lightfoot's Plan calls for a Chicago where "Children enter kindergarten at the same level as their peers," and the best way to measure whether or not that is happening is through proper implementation of the KIDS assessment.

What is happening today that we need to keep: KIDS measures whether or not children are positioned to succeed when they enter kindergarten, which is an important metric in two ways. First, it provides valuable information to teachers and instructional leaders for their direct engagement with children and parents; in other districts, KIDS has been used as a valuable instructional tool to support improved child outcomes and improved professional development opportunities for teachers and principals. Moreover, KIDS will provide citywide data that can help inform strategies to improve kindergarten readiness. There is a public-private partnership in place to support this work that involves leading local foundations, advocacy organizations, and the state, and the new administration should take advantage of this partnership.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days: The administration of KIDS is required by state law -- but the state has not provided adequate support for implementation, and Chicago (like many districts) has struggled to implement the assessment well. In the next 100 days Chicago Public Schools should to mobilize to prepare the professional development and supports teachers and principals to successfully administer KIDS in 2019. This includes support for the administration of the assessment by teachers, and the use of information gleaned from the assessment once collected. Many of the districts that piloted KIDS are several years ahead of Chicago in their implementation, and can provide valuable lessons that Chicago can learn from.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation: Right now the citywide status of kindergarten assessment is not coherent. Individual schools have long had their own initiatives for kindergarten assessment; rather than use KIDS as a base from which they can develop a coherent program, too often they have added it into an existing landscape in which multiple overlapping assessments are administered with varying degrees of support. Over time the City should work to ensure that not only is KIDS administered well, but that it is the centerpiece of a coherent overall assessment strategy for the early grades. This will require teachers and leaders who are trained in how to administer the assessment correctly, use the data to inform instruction, and support child-driven play-based learning that builds on students' strengths. If the City can use assessment effectively in the early years, it greatly increases the chances of improving long-term student outcomes – starting with an effective transition into kindergarten.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative: Developing coherence in an assessment program is never easy, particularly when balancing state requirements and school-based flexibility. Moreover, national research and experience shows that implementing assessments well in the early grades can take years of consistent and well-designed support for professionals; that does not happen on its own. In Chicago – as in cities around the country -- teachers have understandably struggled with initial efforts to implement a required kindergarten assessment, because in general they have not been given the resources they need to do it successfully. Helping teachers, principals, and administrators understand and take advantage of the opportunity presented by KIDS should be a key focus for Chicago Public Schools in the next few years.

Mayoral Education Transition Team

Name: Karen Garibay-Mulattieri, Rebecca Vonderlack-Navarro- Latino Policy Forum

Transition Committee: Education Transition Committee

Prompt: Promote equitable educational opportunities for Latinos, English Learners and immigrant families, who have been historically marginalized within Chicago.

What is the potential initiative?

Ensure that all schools in CPS offer high quality bilingual education and pathways towards the State Seal of Biliteracy, which demonstrates college and career readiness. This must include pathways for EL, Latino, and immigrant students to have full access to rigorous academic curriculum in all core content areas and enrichment courses in their communities, such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Dual Credit. Also ensure that space needs and overcrowding are addressed.

How can the new administration infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative?

The previous mayor and CPS administrators have long neglected equity and access for ELs, Latinos, and immigrant students. To address the needs of these students, there are two key contextual points to understand: (1) adherence to the visionary CPS Board Policy regarding bilingual education and (2) access to rigorous academic content in Latino neighborhoods.

Adhere to Visionary CPS Board Policy on Bilingual Education

CPS would benefit immensely if its practice aligned with its adopted language policy and accountability became a focus. In 2016, the CPS Board of Education adopted Board Policy 603.1 which states, "students in Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade whose language is not English will have equity in education and language acquisition opportunities through the District's Bilingual Education Services. The Board recognizes that cultural identity is inseparable from language and recognizes bilingualism as a desirable goal." A district wide audit, however, illuminated that only 20% of schools were providing adequate support for ELs and immigrant students. Additionally, as an external advocate, the Forum has had to monitor and advocate for district compliance on the use of state and federal EL resources.

Access to Rigorous Academic Content in Latino Neighborhoods

Nationally and in Illinois, Latinos are the least likely to complete a four-year college degree. Chicago could lead the nation by implementing transformational and equitable strategies to reverse this trend. Two-thirds of Latino students in CPS were at one point classified as English learners; for this reason, quality bilingual programs serve as a foundation for most Latino students to be prepared for high school.

It is important to understand the current situation with school choice in Latino neighborhoods. Research is demonstrating that Latinos, ELs and immigrant families largely choose to stay in their communities, despite opportunities that exist elsewhere in the city. The Area Regional Analysis (published by CPS: [ARA](#)) highlighted some important needs for Latino students (47% of district population in 2018-2019 school year) as it relates to programs and school choice.

- 68% of Latino students are enrolled in Level 1+/1 schools compared to 89% of White and Asian students.
- 86% of Latino students are choosing elementary schools in their region (86% of White students are also choosing schools in their region).
- 60% of Latino students are choosing high schools in their region (highest of any racial group).

Some of the areas with highest concentration of Latino students (Pilsen/Little Village, Greater Midway, Greater Stock Yards, Greater Milwaukee, and Greater Calumet) also lack rigorous education programs: Academic Centers, Regional Gifted Centers, Selective Enrollment schools, and Elementary IB programs.

It is imperative that CPS invests in these communities and that geography not drive access to quality programming and courses.

Studies contend that Latino students who enroll in college are largely motivated by a desire to serve their communities. Their abilities to communicate in more than one language are assets which leads to higher career earnings. By improving bilingual services in K-8 and the high school course offerings in Latino neighborhoods, the likelihood of students completing post-secondary education increases.

And as it pertains to this initiative:

1. What is happening today that we need to keep?

- Continue the expansion of dual language programs Pre-K-12.
- Continue the State Seal of Biliteracy Initiative, which grants awards to over 2,000 high school seniors annually.
- Continue the Star Scholarship Program, which has provided two-years of college to eligible high school students, such ELs and immigrants, attending City Colleges.
- Continue to support the engagement of parents of the CPS Chicago Multicultural Leadership Council.

2. What we need to implement in the next 100 days?

- Update the 2016 Audit of all CPS schools serving ELs. Ensure that all CPS schools, including charters, fully implement Board Policy 603.1 by 2022.
- Release the ARA analysis demonstrating the capacity of all schools in predominant Latino neighborhoods to provide access to rigorous education programs.
- Promote transparency by providing information on the space capacity of all schools in CPS, particularly those that may be overcrowded in Latino neighborhoods, including enough classrooms for preschool, full-day kindergarten, and advanced education programs.
- Engage parents and community stakeholders in developing a three-year plan for bringing high-level educational opportunities to Latino, EL and immigrant neighborhoods.
- Provide greater transparency and ensure accountability and compliance with state and federal law for how CPS is using local, state, and federal funds to support these populations.
- Provide greater transparency and accountability on the status of bilingual education in the district.

3. What we can plan for longer-term implementation?

Develop and implement a plan to address all the issues identified above and ensure that all students have access to quality neighborhood schools, including Latino, EL, and immigrant students. Investing in bringing rigorous academic content to Latino communities will have long-term benefits for the individuals and for the city. Once programs are implemented, there will be a need to link high school students to post-secondary opportunities, with a focus on proper career and college counseling. State Seal of Biliteracy students should be considered as a talent pool for various issues, such as the bilingual teacher shortage. Star Scholarship and other incentives can be offered to these candidates to make college affordable. The private sector should be encouraged to recruit State Seal of Biliteracy recipients.

4. What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative?

The political will to develop a targeted and focused imitative to address the identified issues. Enough funding along with incentivizing qualified diverse candidates to enter and stay in the teaching profession may present challenges. Chicago is well-positioned with respect to institutes of higher education, philanthropic foundations, and businesses to address these concerns. Every dollar invested will yield a more prepared workforce, safer neighborhoods, and an overall increase in the quality of life the city offers.



Memo Template

Name: Isaac Castelaz

Transition Committee: **Education**

Potential Initiative: Equitable Education for All

This initiative will ensure that every child, regardless of zip code, can attend schools where she/he is socially, emotionally and academically engaged, resulting in college & career success.

While it is true that the City of Chicago can thrive only so long as it remains a hub for economic growth and opportunity in which its inhabitants feel safe and secure, our city cannot authentically sustain such an identity with a world-class school system. Chicago's next leaders, businesspeople and professionals are not in Silicon Valley, or overseas. They are in our schools.

In broad strokes, there are two important steps the City of Chicago should take in order to create high performing schools in every neighborhood. First, Chicago's public schools should be the first funding priority. Across the board, class size in Chicago should be capped at 20. There is a strong body of research that shows that while reducing class size by only a few students (from 28 to 25 students, for example) does not result in significant achievement gains, large reductions (from 28 to 18-20) almost always results in improved learning. To accomplish this objective, more qualified, effective teachers are needed. To accomplish this, the City of Chicago should expand current teacher training partnerships or establish new ones. By itself, this initiative, if sustained over time, will produce transformational outcomes for Chicago's children and the city in general.

Second, the City of Chicago should retrain Chicago educators to ensure that they employ a culturally responsive mindset in order to establish strong, impactful student relationships. Research suggests that students--especially black and brown students--learn more when they feel safe, cared for, supported, and encouraged. Cultural responsiveness in schools looks like restorative practice, social emotional learning (SEL), culturally relevant curricular resources, and service learning. While few of these ideas are new, none of them have been comprehensively prioritized, at best living through empty, inadequately funded, or completely unfunded mandates.

Strongly supportive schools are those in which all of these are done well, yet none of them can thrive without positive student relationships. When all schools are culturally responsive, student outcomes across zipcodes will become more equitable.

To: Mayor-Elect Lightfoot

From: [Raise Your Hand for Illinois Public Education](#)

Objective: Ensure all students have access to the quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success.



Initiative: Restructure CPS from a portfolio/choice district to a sustainable community schools district -- a system of neighborhood schools with resources equitably distributed to provide every child with the education they need to become active participants in our public life.

How values are infused in this initiative:

Equity: Competition is fundamentally incompatible with equity. A school system where schools and students must compete for scarce resources is inherently inequitable. Instead:

- **Allocate operating funds via a need- and evidence-based formula.** Simplistic per-pupil budgeting (CPS's "student-based budgeting") exacerbates inequity. Allocate funding in a way that (1) does not further damage communities suffering from depopulation and displacement; (2) does not incentivize schools to hire less experienced teachers; (3) accounts for the specific needs of the population a school serves.
- **Make capital funding decisions via a transparent, inclusive process.** All students deserve clean, safe, modern school facilities. Demographic predictions should be based on publicly available data and models. Repairs and maintenance of existing buildings should be prioritized over new construction.

Transparency:

- **Engage parents and students at every level of the policy making process.** The reasoning and evidence to support new CPS policies should be easily available to the public well in advance of when a decision will be made so there is a genuine opportunity for deliberate input from parents, students, school community and the public.
- **The BoE should comply with both the spirit and the letter of the Open Meetings Act.** Meetings should be held on evenings and weekends, live streamed, in large venues outside downtown. Observers should not be required to pre register. Closed sessions should be minimal. Participation bans should be re-evaluated.
- **Respect the Freedom of Information Act.** Fund CPS FOIA office adequately; don't ignore and deny requests.

Accountability:

- **Replace appointed BoE with an elected BoE.** The Board needs to be held accountable at the ballot box.
- **Create a public process to nominate and vet board appointments until there is an elected board.**
- **End privatization of janitorial, nursing, facilities/capital improvement management.** Private contractors in these areas have been costly fiascos and unaccountable to the public for their failures.
- **Stop charter expansion.** Privately-run schools funded by public dollars are not accountable in the same way public schools are. Diversion of dollars to charters in a district with declining enrollment is a dereliction of fiduciary duty.

Diversity & Inclusion:

- **Provide wraparound services and supports to meet the needs of each and every student.** Clinician ratios for counselors, social workers, psychologists, and nurses should be brought to nationally recommended staffing levels to ensure consistent, competent care and legally mandated provision of services.
- **Mandate support of ethical and appropriate Individualized Education Programs (IEP) Team decisions** for the benefit of each and every student with disabilities in Chicago Public Schools.
- **Remove test scores as a barrier to access to a well-resourced education for any student.** Currently, students are ranked and sorted based on test scores with the most resources going to the least in need, and some students (e.g. students with disabilities) are shut out of opportunities altogether.
- **Provide Local School Councils with resources for training and support needed to function effectively.**

Transformation:

- **Create an equity-driven system where all schools are ready to serve every child who walks through the door.** Every child has guaranteed access to a well-rounded education close to home. The arts, a library and librarian, extracurriculars, small classes, unstructured play are not “options” - they are basics. Services and supports required by IEPs and 504 plans are not discretionary, they are mandatory.
- **Revolutionize how and why we assess students, teachers and schools.** The school quality rating policy and the promotion policy need to be overhauled. Sparing use should be made of racially, linguistically, economically biased standardized testing, with no high-stakes decisions based on test scores. Students should be assessed for their own learning, not as part of accountability measures for teachers, administrators, and schools. Assessment should be used for non-punitive purposes and include multiple measures and qualitative factors, like human observation.

For this initiative:

What is happening now that should keep happening?

- Pilot of sustainable community schools; restorative justice programs; Local School Councils.
- Maintain current programs and initiatives that are working in individual schools.

What needs to be implemented in the next 100 days?

- Renounce the schools-as-a-business model and return to having a Superintendent of Schools.
- Develop plan to reform operating budgets, including study of how funds cut since 2013 can be restored to individual schools—or communities, if schools have been closed—and comparison of admin costs of CPS vs. other districts.
- Announce intent to overhaul school rating system and promotion policy.
- Restart the Chicago Education Facilities Task Force (CEFTF) and comply with its recommendations
- Audit all existing contracts to be sure they are student-focused, cost effective, and avoid conflicts.
- Remove Chicago Police Department officers from schools and reallocate funding to other supports.
- Replace staff who enforced the illegal policies and procedures put in place under previous CEOs.
- Develop meaningful competency and accountability measures for CPS-employed and contract nursing staff.
- Implement tracking system to identify all nurses in our schools (including agency nurses) including certifications etc.
- Create new Health Care Aide position for every CPS school to fulfill routine daily medical needs of students.
- Create & implement policy to protect student data privacy & security ensure data is not exploited commercially.

What needs to be planned for in terms of longer-term implementation?

- Prioritize resources for a sustainable community schools district.
- Collaborate with community organizations, disability rights groups, and CTU on all initiatives.
- Implement recommendations of IEP teams and 504 plans created via a process that fully includes parent input to ensure IEPs and 504 plans are written to meet student needs not budgetary constraints.
- Reform school utilization formula; reimagine community uses of facilities in conjunction with CEFTF.

What challenges might be encountered in executing this initiative?

- Structural deficit exists because of inadequate state and city funding. The TIF system siphons off dollars and exacerbates inequities. Finding new revenue resources and reforming TIF are difficult but imperative.
- Test scores have been the dominant measure of education quality for more than 25 years. We need a new vision where quality of education is more than a score.
- CPS has historically been unable to police itself when it comes to special education issues. Even post- ISBE inquiry, the CPS administration has shown little sense of urgency about making things right for the students who continue to be harmed by past and current denial of services.
- Schools do not exist in a vacuum. Enduring neighborhood effects and 100 years of segregation led to the systematic disenfranchisement and denial of resources to communities in the most need.
- Resorting to top-down, message-over-substance strategies is simpler than implementing systemic solutions developed via a truly inclusive, democratic process.



5437 W. Division St. Chicago, IL 60651 (773) 378-5034

April 15, 2019

Re: What we need for continued support

Dear Education Transition Committee:

The Austin community on the Westside of Chicago is one of the most underserved communities in the city, and have remained so for many years. For as long as I can remember, we have reached out to our Aldermen and other elected officials to invest more funding in our schools. We need improved curriculums, books, computers and general building maintenance, however, unfortunately, some of the schools were simply closed instead of invested into.

We need continued support for the Parent Mentor Program in the Austin community. The Parent Mentor Program is currently taking place in four of our elementary schools. ***The Parent Mentor Program is a shining beacon of light for our children*** to ensure that no child is or will be left behind in the future. The program is the glue that brings our parents back into the schools and educate them on how to work hand in hand with the teachers in the classrooms to ensure that the needs of all students are being met. Parents also take this new-found knowledge back to their homes to help their own children and back into the community to help strengthen it.

I'm sure that this is not only true in the Austin community but of other communities as well throughout the city of Chicago. I only hope that the Education Transition Committee under Mayor Lightfoot can see how important it is for Austin and all communities to keep the Parent Mentor Program vested in our communities. Whatever you can do will be greatly appreciated by all.

Please don't take away our blessing!

Sincerely,

Julia Flowers
Parent Mentor Organizer
Westside Health Authority
5437 W. Division St. Chicago, 60651

Potential Initiative

A new Department of Collaboration should be established that would be specifically focused on sharing best practices across all Chicago Public Schools (CPS).

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:

In its plan to transform CPS, the Lightfoot administration said specifically, “working together, we will create a pre-K-12 school system that provides equal opportunities for students, regardless of income, address or background, and which erases the achievement and graduation gaps between students.” The New York City Department of Education has an Office of Interschool Collaborative Learning to focus on equity and inclusion between schools and classrooms. Less than 10 years ago, the University of Chicago’s Consortium on Chicago School Research produced a report entitled Organizing Schools for Improvement that produced a number of conclusions focused on collaboration both between classrooms and between schools. Arguably even more important than University of Chicago’s report was the work by Barber, Chijioke and Mourshed that included:

The power of collective capacity is that it enables ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things—for two reasons. One is that knowledge about effective practice becomes more widely available and accessible on a daily basis. The second reason is more powerful still—working together generates commitment.

This new focus on collaboration is not unique to New York and academics though. Cincinnati began its collaborative approach to education in the 1980s. Springfield, Massachusetts was able to completely change their school system in less than 10 years, thanks in part to a program named Springfield Collaboration for Change, which was funded by the National Education Association Foundation.

In relation to this initiative – what is happening today that we need to keep:

The importance of collaboration is foundational to CPS. The system of school networks itself is set up in part to allow different schools to work together. Professional development days also include some aspect of collaboration, but often in a more top-down manner than true collaboration.

However, neither professional development nor the system of school networks is focused exclusively on sharing best practices. The Lightfoot administration can improve parity to CPS by sharing best practices across schools and across networks. The idea that every student and parent deserve the best is exactly the goal of the proposed Department of Collaboration.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days:

Hiring professionals, setting up a steering committee of educators, parents, community leaders and students which will operate transparently with all meetings open to the public.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation:

A Department of Collaboration could focus specifically on sharing best practices. Given the right tools, collaboration between teachers, administrators, coaches and staff could happen quickly and easily. Therefore, the proposed new department would have three different mechanisms of sharing:

- 1. Social Media and Blackboard:** This would be the first and easiest step to share best practices. On social media and/or the Blackboard system, teachers, parents and administrators would be encouraged to share any and all best practices. This would vary widely, from small tasks that have a huge difference, to large sweeping changes that could help bring parity to the CPS as a whole.
- 2. Regular Reports from the Department:** Either monthly or bi-monthly the Department would create a report that would be easily accessible to the public. These reports would serve two functions. First and foremost, they would be an easy resource for educators to improve. Second, they would be an opportunity to celebrate the best of the best while sharing information.
- 3. Annual Reports in Partnership with Universities:** These research reports would be much larger in scope. They would focus exclusively and bridging the gap between our elite schools and our underperforming schools.

A fully activated team of collaborators could be in place by the start of the 2019 – 2020 school year, but certainly impacts could be felt long before then. If implemented quickly, an online collaboration tool could see benefits within weeks. There are great things happening in classrooms around Chicago right now that simply are not being shared effectively.

Getting rewards in the hands of teachers for these best practices would help boost the visibility of the program.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative:

Engaging stakeholders early in the process would be vital. Chicago Teachers Union would have to be engaged and supportive for the Department of Collaboration to have its greatest impact. The same can be said for Network Chiefs and Principals. There would also be some financial investment or resources would have to be moved. To truly reach the goals of equity, inclusion and transformation, this would have to be a new and independent entity. But with proper investment and the right people on board, the Department of Collaboration would allow teachers, administrators and staff from all over the city to have a sudden and dramatic impact on each other and most importantly, Chicago's young people.

There is much more to this plan. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Justin Heath at 630.747.4992 or justinpheath@gmail.com.



EDUCATION ORGANIZING

Focus areas of our
organizing and
programming agenda

nwshc.org
773-283-3888

1. Pro-public schools: for the past five years, we have organized local parent leaders from our community schools to advocate for a new home for Belmont Cragin Elementary School. And in March 2019, many of these parent leaders successfully blocked the construction of a new charter school in Network 3. As one parent leader said: "We have issues of overcrowding and underfunding in our public schools, this new charter would have continued to drain funding from our public schools."

2. Parent engagement: since 2013, the NWSHC has facilitated the Parent Mentor Program across several neighborhood public elementary, middle, and high schools. This program provides crucial one-on-one academic and social support in classrooms that are often overcrowded. The PMP also serves as a platform for parents to develop as leaders; many of them were at the forefront of our new school and anti-charter organizing efforts.

3. Resiliency-building: today, nine staff members are trained Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) presenters. And our agency leads the Resilient Belmont Cragin Community Collaborative to provide trauma-informed education to community groups, police, and youth-serving agencies.

4. Community School Initiative: we lead an array of arts, cultural, athletic, music, and mentorship programs at Steinmetz College Prep called 'After Hours'. These programs are led by resiliency-trained staff to provide safe and peaceful spaces for education, self-regulation, and personal growth.

5. Youth leadership development: our Belmont Cragin Youth Leadership Council empowers youth to be change-makers who know how to use their power to create change. Our Council provides a consistent space for students to grow as civic leaders, receive academic and emotional support, and presently, organize for improved public transportation.

Name: Lynnette McRae

Transition Committee: Education

Prompt: How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative?

I am writing this memo as a young woman living in Bronzeville who is concerned about matters of racial equity in this City, and particularly as it relates to education. I'm not an expert on education- in fact, my understanding of the public education system and the funding and decisions that surround it, is very limited. I wish that I had a better understanding of the system and that there was clear information that I could readily access as it relates to our schools. Do kids who attend Phillips High School and Dunbar High School just blocks from me get the same quality of education that students at Lane Tech or Whitney Young get? We all know the answer to that is no, but what I don't know for sure is how much per student are these schools in Bronzeville or other schools on the west and south sides getting in terms of funding, versus the higher performing schools? Is our funding system truly equitable in the sense that schools and students needing the most resources actually getting them? If not, what are the barriers to this? I don't have answers to these questions, but I'd love to see this new administration create spaces for these conversations to be had in communities so we can be more informed and educated of what's happening and to more openly question the way that we've been doing things. In the process, I hope this will create space for us to bring new ideas to the table- some that are out of the box and some that have been tried and tested in other parts of the State and country and been successful.

My gut tells me that we should be thinking differently about how we resource schools that have struggling student populations and we shouldn't be afraid to get them the additional resources that they need in order to start to close achievement gaps in this city which are far too often dictated by race.

As an example of this, I'm interested in what lessons we could learn from the early success of Lebron James's I Promise School in Akron, OH (see article [here](#)). This school receives funding consistent with any other school in their district (on a per-capita basis), but they have been able to attain some notable achievements, through culturally relevant staff, instruction and providing supports to family members and students in a human-centered, trauma-informed way. I'm not an expert on education by any means, but I'd like to think that we can draw lessons from successes like this to incorporate in our schools.

It's so important that we think equitably and innovatively around how to ensure that each child in this city gets the educational, social and emotional support that they need. If we don't, I'm afraid that we won't have much hope making a true impact on addressing violence, economic development and the overall health of our City.

Thank you for your consideration and for your efforts to improve our City for all of us!

From: Matthew Bruce, Executive Director, Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance

Transition Committee: Education Transition Committee

Prompt: Ensuring all students have access to quality postsecondary options that enable them to live and thrive in Chicago.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this memo to the Committee. My organization is a collaboration of Chicago's leading private funders of workforce development. We work to increase employment, earnings and racial equity for Chicago's workforce, and thus work very closely with the City of Chicago and its many workforce institutions and organizations. Thank you for the Memo Template as well:

A potential initiative: Empowering Chicago's Career Pathway Network

The goal embodied in the prompt is the right goal and something the Funder Alliance is actively working towards in deep collaboration with the City. Chicago already has the institutions and the leadership in place to achieve this goal; it needs to invest in those institutions and empower that leadership.

Over the past few months, the Funder Alliance has helped convene several conversations with the institutions and advocates of Chicago's Career Pathway Network, to discuss what we should collectively highlight and lift up to a new administration. The overwhelming consensus was we needed to lift up the achievements of our shared Network over the past years, which is a story of systems coming together.

The Network I am referring to is the collaboration between five key City institutions: City Colleges of Chicago, the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, Chicago Public Schools, the Department of Family Support Services, and the Chicago Housing Authority. This is the Network in which our funder collaboration is investing our time, effort and resources. We are doing so because this Network is the best way to achieve impact at scale, and because the potential for improving this impact systemically has never been greater than it is now with the trusting relationships being built across these institutions.

To empower this network further, we must continue to build their collective ability to work with employers on innovative workforce solutions. We work with a growing network of employer-led initiatives: [Financial Services Pipeline](#), [Chicagoland Healthcare Workforce Collaborative / West Side United](#), [Chicago Apprentice Network](#), [Reimagine Retail](#). We believe the path to better post-secondary outcomes for Chicagoans follows greater collaboration between the Network and employer partnerships.

Equity, transparency, accountability, diversity/inclusion and transformation in this Initiative

One of the other consensus building conversations we helped convene in preparation for the transition was to answer the question: What are the shared principles of Chicago's Career Pathway Network? Again, there was strong consensus that the Network does share Principles. Fortunately, they very much align with the values of the new administration. The shared principles are that the Network should be: Demand-Driven, Accountable, Collaborative, Equitable and Continuously Improving. While we recognize these are aspirational, and there is much work to do, we also have worked with this Network enough to know, they truly try to live these principles every day. The initiatives they initiate are driven by data and by labor market demand; the separate boards they report to hold them accountable; they collaborate with each other successfully, now more than ever; they care deeply about equity and use data to focus on closing gaps, and; they are always trying to improve, seeking new ideas from across the country and from their own talented staff. The best way for the new administration to infuse its values, is to keep empowering the Network to live out the Principles they already pursue.

What is happening today that we need to keep and What we need to implement in the next 100 days

CCC and CPS have been working on a joint plan, this is something that can and should be built upon. There is so much room for greater impact through greater collaboration, and the process these institutions have engaged in can provide a jumping off point towards that greater impact. Similarly, we see greater collaboration between CCC and the Partnership leading to greater impact as well, but only if arrived at through a process they own themselves. Finally, maintaining a high-level workforce point person in the Mayor's Office is essential, workforce must not be subsumed under other issues.

What can be planned for longer-term implementation

Empowering the Network is a baseline; longer-term we would like to work with the City on the systemic issues facing our career pathway system, these are the same issues hurting post-secondary outcomes: Under-Funding – there needs to be more resources directed to career pathway programs and supports; Criminal Justice - the City needs a comprehensive diversion/re-entry strategy, led by this Network; Childcare – the City also needs a systemic approach to ramping up affordable early childhood education and care, and the workforce that will require, and this Network should play a leading role in that as well.

What challenges may arise

The constant challenge is fragmentation, whose root causes are in funding streams and unhelpful public policies. This is why the collaborative potential of the Network is so important, while also so fragile.

Name: Mary F. Morten, Board Chair, Illinois Safe Schools Alliance

Transition Committee: Education

Potential Initiative: Educate students and staff on policies and initiatives in place to support LGBTQ+ students in Chicago Public Schools.

The Chicago Public Schools District 299 has many protections in place for LGBTQ+ students. Many of these protections are codified in the District's Guidelines for Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students, Anti-Bullying Policy, and Sexual Health Education Policy. These policies are supported by the work of the Office of Student Health & Wellness (OSHW), Law Department, Office of Student Protections (OSP), and outside partners.

However, in our advocacy work supporting LGBTQ+ students who are in non-affirming educational environments, we still see gaps in the implementation of these policies. Some schools are aware of the policies in place and the initiatives that support them, like the OSHW's Supporting Gender Diversity Toolkit. But there are many schools who are unaware of the policies or fail to implement them effectively. In speaking to administrators, classroom teachers, and support staff at many schools, there is a simple lack of awareness of these policies in many CPS school buildings.

We believe a campaign to educate students on their rights, including the rights of students who are or are perceived to be LGBTQ+, will help ensure that student rights are respected across CPS. We believe that this campaign can, and should, be equitable by prioritizing schools on the South and West Sides of Chicago. Studies show that LGBTQ+ students are disciplined in school at high rates, and LGBTQ+ youth of color are disciplined at higher rates than their white counterparts¹. Further, LGBTQ+ youth make up approximately 15% of the juvenile detention population (while only making up 6% of the general population) and black students make up 27% of those referred to law enforcement but only 16% of students enrolled in school². By prioritizing educational rights efforts in schools that have high percentages of black students enrolled, CPS can be inclusive of its most diverse students while being equitable with its resources.

CPS can increase equity in this initiative by providing small grants to under funded schools who participate in the educational rights program. In our experience, many under funded schools lack institutional supports to handle new initiatives. Funding for schools who participate in the program may lead to more successful implementation. To measure success of the program, CPS could administer surveys to track how climate changes at the schools participating and publish the results annually.

¹ GLSEN (2016). Educational exclusion: Drop out, push out, and school-to-prison pipeline among LGBTQ youth. New York: GLSEN. https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/Educational%20Exclusion_Report_6-28-16_v4_WEB_READY_PDF.pdf

² GSA Network (2013), LGBTQ Youth Of Color: Discipline Disparities, School Push-Out, and the School-to-Prison Pipeline. Oakland: GSA Network. https://gsanetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/LGBTQ_brief_FINAL.pdf

CPS has great ground to launch this project from. OSHW has developed supplemental materials to help schools implement many of CPS' affirming policies. The Gender Diversity Toolkit that was developed in partnership with the Alliance and other community organizations has proved immensely helpful in our advocacy work. We often refer staff from school districts outside of Chicago to the toolkit. CPS' current work to develop a student bill of rights also directly supports this potential initiative. Including LGBTQ+ educational rights in these materials would bolster what is already a strong initiative.

In the next 100 days, CPS should identify and secure partnerships with community organizations who can educate CPS staff and students on students' educational rights. CPS can also identify priority schools, based on demographics, disciplinary outcomes, and referrals to law enforcement. Further, CPS can begin to develop evaluation materials to gauge the needs of these schools.

We believe community organizations, like the Alliance, will be instrumental to the success of this program. The Alliance has developed youth-facing Know Your Rights materials related to Law & Policy, LGBTQ+ Rights in School, Sexual Health & Wellness, School Discipline, and Organizing & Advocacy³. We are currently working to develop wallet cards, magnets, stickers, and other small items that contain rights materials. Our hope is that these materials will be more digestible and easier for students to have on their person when they need to exercise their rights. Other youth-serving organizations we partner with, like the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health, have developed similar materials in the past. Partnering with community organizations who bring expertise to relevant subject areas will help ensure the long-term success of the project, as many of our own know your rights projects are already developed and will continue to be offered regardless of CPS initiatives.

While CPS has many structures in place to support the project, ensuring that it is implemented equitably will be a challenge. Like many initiatives, schools may only pursue the subjects that feel most relevant to them. For example, a school may choose to educate students on their rights as it pertains to special education, but not racial discrimination, or vice versa. We believe a grant program with annual evaluations can help mitigate this lack of equity.

Schools that are inadequately staffed may also experience difficulties implementing this program. In the past, we have attempted to reach out to schools on the South and West Sides for similar initiatives. Some have been completely unresponsive, expressed that they cannot make time for programming, or stated that they do not have the appropriate after-school spaces for outside programming. We hope that a directive from CPS, coupled with funding for the individual schools, will help these schools prioritize the project.

³ The Illinois Safe School Alliance's Know Your Rights booklets and curricula can be found here: <https://www.ilsafeschools.org/know-your-rights-en>

Initiative: Ensuring all students have access to the quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success.

I firmly believe there is a fundamental right for the students of Chicago Public Schools to have access to quality schools, quality teachers and quality supports that they need to progress through K-12. A healthy beginning, middle and end must give focus on Chicago's children feeling safe in their school; particularly those who experience violence in its many forms. Black, brown, poor and other marginalized children experience a heavy police presence in schools where the same is not realized in affluent and predominantly white schools. The freedom to exist, learn and to feel free to explore liberation through education is vital to a quality of life and global citizenry.

Chicago Police Officers act as resource officers in CPS schools across the city, particularly the South and West side of the city. This has had a devastating effect on student safety, learning, opportunity and happiness. Today, there are resources officers in Chicago's schools who have amassed sixty (60) complaints, 14 use of force complaints, nine (9) substantiated complaints and various suspensions. On February 1, 2019 livestream video and other media reported a 16-year old Black female student on West side tasered by CPD officer in Marshall High School...this type of behavior is unacceptable, negligent and sends a chilling effect across schools and communities plagued by a militarized police presence. This unfortunate violence took place just one-day after Chicago entered a federal consent decree to reform police.

In accordance with [Chicago's Consent Decree](#) dated January 31, 2019; see Section G. School-Assigned Officers on page 11. In part it states; *through intergovernmental agreements between CPD and CPS, CPD has assigned officers to work in CPS schools. In the event that CPD and CPS decide to continue this practice, officers assigned to work in CPS schools will be appropriately vetted, trained, and guided by clear policy in order to cultivate relationships of mutual respect and understanding, and foster a safe, supportive, and positive learning environment for students.*

To that end, my strong recommendation would be to eliminate the informal agreement between CPD and CPS. Before the start of the 2019-2020 school year, CPS should integrate restorative best practices with community-centered mediation, recruiting/retaining community leaders, partnerships and initiatives. Should CPS and CPD continue this agreement; they must not stop at training...100% of officers assigned must be trained, screened for fitness including social, emotional, mental/health and national practices around trauma and police culture.

Review of Chicago Police Department's Management of School Resource Officers

"OIG encouraged CPD and CPS to resolve these issues prior to the start of the 2018-2019 school year, so that CPS students could benefit from a functional SRO program rooted in national best practices as soon as possible, including:"

- Undertake best efforts to enter into an MOU with CPS that clearly delineates authority and specifies procedures for CPD officer interaction with students while on school grounds;
- Develop a policy that defines roles, responsibilities, and appropriate actions of SROs, which will include an express prohibition on the administration of school discipline by CPD officers and provisions for the collection, analysis, and use of data regarding CPD activities in schools;

- Develop and implement screening criteria to ensure SROs have the qualifications, skills, and abilities necessary to work safely and effectively with students, parents/guardians, and school personnel; and
- Ensure that all SROs receive initial specialized training and annual refresher trainings, and encourage SROs to exercise discretion to use alternatives to arrest and referral to juvenile court.

Link to report: <https://iqchicago.org/2018/09/13/review-of-the-chicago-police-departments-management-of-school-resource-officers/>

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Nelson Gerew, Director of Data & Policy, The Chicago Public Education Fund

PROMPT: Ensure all students in Chicago public schools have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed.

Proposed Initiative: Maintain and enhance Chicago's strengths in principal leadership.

Context and Values: For many years, Chicago has invested significantly in principal leadership and in providing school leaders autonomy. Both nationwide and in Chicago, principal leadership can have a transformative effect, especially for the highest-need students. National research suggests that a top principal produces student gains of between two and seven months of additional learning in one academic year.ⁱ More effective principals are more likely to retain their best teachers and less likely to retain their lowest performing teachers.ⁱⁱ In fact, "there are virtually no documented instances of troubled schools being turned around without intervention by a powerful leader. Many other factors may contribute to such turnarounds, but leadership is the catalyst."ⁱⁱⁱ

In Chicago, principals are particularly important because they have unique authority to impact their schools and drive student outcomes. Chicago principals are empowered and accountable for results, and they have delivered for their students. Indeed, there may be "no better place to see the difference that principals can make than Chicago."^{iv} When looking for an explanation for Chicago's outlier status in Sean Reardon's research that placed Chicago as growing faster than the vast majority of districts nationwide, national experts point to the city's development and support of principals.^v

Finally, unique among large districts nationwide, the majority of Chicago principals are selected by Local School Councils (LSCs), individual representative bodies of parents, educators, students and community members. This structure provides a more equitable and inclusive decision-making process around school leadership than a traditional selection process; a focus on principal leadership naturally augments these existing advantages.

What is happening today that we need to keep:

A combination of state law and district practice empower principals in district-operated schools to make major decisions around many aspects of their schools, including budget, curriculum and scheduling. These budget, academic and scheduling autonomies represent a competitive advantage for Chicago Public Schools (CPS). They must be protected if we hope to attract, support and retain top principals and capture the gains they can produce for all of Chicago's students.

In addition, CPS maintains a strong set of opportunities for additional principal autonomy and engagement. These include the Independent School Principals (ISP) program, under which nearly 100 principals receive additional autonomy; the Chicago Principals Fellowship operated in partnership with Northwestern University, in which principals interact directly with CPS leadership on key policy topics; and a CEO Principal Advisory Committee, which regularly provides direct feedback to the CEO on district priorities and initiatives.

Finally, under the School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) and principal evaluation, principals in district-operated schools are publicly held accountable for the outcomes of all their students. This accountability, combined with autonomy and support, is a powerful lever to ensure all Chicago's students are able to succeed.

What we need to implement within the next 100 days:

- **Put principals at the center of decision-making when possible.**
 - Conduct a series of meetings and focus groups with Chicago principals (leading district-operated as well as charter schools) to identify areas of current challenge and concern, as they relate to principal autonomy, especially around key upcoming policy issues such as the budget and Chicago Teachers Union contract negotiations.
- **Review and summarize principal concerns around their levels of autonomy and support.**
 - Principal surveys conducted by The Chicago Public Education Fund (The Fund),^{vi} The UChicago Consortium on School Research and CPS over several years have identified areas where principals face obstacles. The Fund's survey has a response rate of over 80 percent. The Mayor's Office should work with CPS to review these findings and present clear responses to areas of concern.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation:

- **Support close principal engagement with community members, especially through LSCs.**
 - Increase supports and training for LSCs, especially around the principal hiring and selection process.
Include principals in critical conversations about the city's future at the civic, corporate and community level.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative:

Chicago has over 650 principals and over 20,000 teachers. In a system of schools that is as large and diverse as Chicago is, principals are critical to improvement in every school context and must therefore be at the center of decision-making about our schools. However, given competing demands for scarce resources, it may be challenging to create space for authentic and honest conversations led by principals, educators and community members.

ⁱ Branch, G. F., Hanushek, E. A., & Rivkin, S. G. (2012, January). Estimating the Effect of Leaders on Public Sector Productivity: The Case of School Principals. Retrieved December 1, 2018, from <http://hanushek.stanford.edu/publications/estimating-effect-leaders-public-sector-productivity-caseschool-principals>

ⁱⁱ Grissom, J. A., & Bartanen, B. (2018, September 27). Strategic Retention: Principal Effectiveness and Teacher Turnover in Multiple-Measure Teacher Evaluation Systems. Retrieved October 1, 2018, from <https://www.aera.net/Newsroom/Strategic-Retention-Principal-Effectiveness-and-Teacher-Turnover-in-MultipleMeasure-Teacher-Evaluation-Systems>

ⁱⁱⁱ Leithwood, K., Seashore Louis, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). How Leadership Influences Student Learning [Scholarly project]. Retrieved October 1, 2018, from <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/How-Leadership-InfluencesStudent-Learning.pdf>

^{iv} Leonhardt, D. (2017, March 10). Want to Fix Schools? Go to the Principal's Office. Retrieved October 1, 2018, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/10/opinion/sunday/want-to-fix-schools-go-to-theprincipals-office.html>

^v <https://www.americanprogress.org/events/2018/03/28/448582/lessons-chicago-leveraging-leadership-community-partnerships/>

^{vi} <https://chicagoprincipals.org/principal-engagement-survey/>



A single degree.
A world of opportunity.

Memo to the Education Transition Committee For Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

From: Paige Ponder, CEO, One Million Degrees
To: Education Transition Committee
Re: *Ensuring all students have access to quality postsecondary options to enable them to live and thrive in Chicago*

The Situation

The fact that the graduation rate at City Colleges has risen in the last 10 years from 7% to 24% is evidence that there has been tremendous improvement within this critical set of institutions. But even as CCC approaches state and national averages for community college graduation, 3 of every 4 students who start at City Colleges with plans to earn a degree or credential never make it to that goal. These missed opportunities should be unacceptable to everyone in this city.

A recent Brookings Institution report aptly summarizes: "...(C)ommunity colleges have substantial unrealized potential to improve the earnings and employment outcomes for those at the bottom of the income distribution. Indeed, community colleges could play a pivotal role in providing a pathway to upward economic mobility because of their ability to reach a large population of low-income, minority students."¹

This is certainly true for Chicago, and the city should fully embrace the City Colleges of Chicago as the engines of economic mobility that they can be.

The Opportunity

One Million Degrees accelerates community college students on their career pathways to economic mobility. We provide an innovative, integrated ecosystem of supports to 500 low-income City Colleges students that an ongoing randomized controlled trial with the U Chicago Poverty Lab is showing to have profound effects. Our very promising early results show that, if given the appropriate levels of support and guidance, *dramatically* more City Colleges students could persist and thrive in community college and graduate prepared to tackle the next steps in their education and careers.

Our model, and our close partnership with all seven City Colleges of Chicago and the U Chicago Poverty Lab, holds the potential to double graduation rates in a very short period of time.

I propose an initiative to provide holistic supports to all City Colleges of Chicago students to drive up enrollment, persistence, completion, and high quality transition into work or into a bachelor's degree program.

¹ Levesque, Elizabeth Mann, "Improving community college completion rates by addressing structural and motivational barriers," Brookings Institution; October 8, 2018; <https://www.brookings.edu/research/community-college-completion-rates-structural-and-motivational-barriers/>

The combination of supports that OMD has found effective – just-in-time academic help; a thriving community of goal-oriented, fellow scholars; professional development and career skill-building with caring volunteers who are professionals or retired professionals; and financial assistance that helps smooth over the additional costs of going to college (transportation, childcare, internet access, books) and accelerate progress toward goals – could be delivered in a number of ways, not necessarily only through the growth of One Million Degrees itself.

We must look for the most cost-effective, scalable, and sustainable way to provide these supports. Some options include:

- Growing OMD's capacity to serve a large, but targeted and strategic, group of CCC students, such as all incoming students matriculating from CPS²
- Working closely with CCC to provide training and support on key components of the OMD model for academic advisors, counselors, and others in CCC dedicated to accelerating student success
- Creating a Fellowship for recent CCC graduates to provide near-peer mentoring to current CCC students, using elements of OMD's current success coaching model
- Creating a large volunteer corps of professional and retired professionals trained to provide personal support and transfer and career counseling to thousands of CCC students annually, based on OMD's volunteer coaching program (which engages 500-600 or more volunteers annually)

The Next 100 Days

I would like to debrief the committee on the results-to-date of our impact study with U Chicago Poverty Lab and work with CCC to draft a comprehensive scaling plan to leverage these findings for larger impact across City Colleges.

The Challenges

As we work towards this goal, we will face challenges in funding: OMD is currently 90% privately funded with no city funding. Providing the appropriate levels of support for community college students, who hold so much potential for our city, will require a different level of investment than they have received to date. However, as these supports start to change student outcomes and more students graduate, the amount that we spend *per graduate* will go down, even as we spend more per student.

We will also encounter resistance from those who choose to blame the students themselves for not graduating, rather than hold the systems who serve them accountable for their success. This is the resistance that CPS eventually overcame in 15 years of the Freshmen On-Track movement. CPS has proven that if the adults in the system conspire to do whatever it takes to ensure student success, the students will always rise to the occasion.

We can repeat this success story in community colleges across Chicago.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this memo.

² Most recent findings in our RCT demonstrate that OMD is having a huge impact on CPS students enrolling in CCC at all, compared to the control group. Our recruitment efforts seem to be serving as a college access initiative and a counter to summer melt. This was an unexpected finding for us.

Memo - Education Transition Committee

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Rukiya Curvey Johnson, Director - Rush University Medical Center

PROMPT: *How can we ensure all students have access to quality postsecondary options that enable them to live and thrive in Chicago?*

INITIATIVE: **Develop and strengthen healthcare career pathways system** with a focus on addressing educational opportunity gaps, increasing diversity of the healthcare workforce, and cultivating a pipeline of health professionals focused on reducing health disparities for West Side neighborhoods.

Over the next ten years, the healthcare labor market is projected to grow at a much higher rate than any other industry. In Chicago, the healthcare industry is the largest private employer and accounts for ~25% of middle-skill or “high demand occupations that also pay a living wage.” Healthcare offers a variety of meaningful well-paying jobs, which often requires some additional postsecondary education to put students on track for a brighter future. Unfortunately, there is inequality and inequitable access to those jobs for many Chicagoans. We know that too few African-Americans and LatinX residents are prepared for those available jobs or are equipped to advance to the middle and high skill careers. While Chicago Public Schools has seen an increase in college enrollment, too few complete postsecondary education and fewer still develop the skills to succeed in good jobs.

The Lightfoot administration can contribute to the positive trajectory of our youth by actively championing and facilitating the collaboration, strategic partnership and engagement of Chicago Public Schools (CPS), City Colleges of Chicago (CCC), and Rush University Medical Center to design an accessible, inclusive quality career pathways system for healthcare. This strategic collaboration on a high-quality career pathways system includes ***an emphasis on recruiting African-American and LatinX youth, developing common goals for success, articulation agreements between institutions, and allocating appropriate resources to provide the necessary wraparound services to support education to career transitions*** for the in-demand, high growth healthcare sector.

Over the past year, the Rush Education and Career Hub (REACH) worked with key stakeholders to provide over 250 high school youth with work-based learning experiences and piloted a healthcare, career exploration enrichment elective for middle school students. These efforts along with other investments from BMO Harris in Building Healthy Urban Communities, the Gates Foundation, and JP Morgan Chase provide training in market-driven and employability skills for high school and college students, promoting greater access and success in the healthcare sector.

In January 2019, Rush renewed its commitment to retool and strengthen efforts for youth workforce development in partnership with CPS, City Hall, and CCC. The goals for the partnership are to achieve the following:

- Recruit and retain students from underrepresented backgrounds towards careers in the health professions; through strategic partnerships with Chicago Public Schools and City Colleges of Chicago.
- Provide measurable increases in postsecondary persistence and attainment for program participants at the high school level.
- Provide measurable increases in the number of applicants and matriculates for undergraduate and graduate/professional programs from underrepresented minority groups as a means to address health disparities through the diversification of the health workforce.
- Provide a playbook or national model for coordinated, cross-institutional pipeline development for underserved populations; leveraging anchor institution collaboration and informing best practices of private-public partnerships to support health workforce development.

Critical activities that we should continue doing to support this transformative initiative include:

- **Regularly scheduled partnership meetings** between the institutions (CPS, CCC, and Rush) to support the development of the Early College STEM- Health Sciences Pathway, the Building Healthy Urban Communities Programming, and Youth Workforce Development. These are all strands that support the broader initiative of a Healthcare Career Pathways System.
- **Continued funding support for youth stipends** via One Summer Chicago or other programs to provide paid work-based learning experiences to youth.
- **Continue support for Early College STEM schools** by providing opportunities for students to accelerate their learning and earn valuable college credit towards postsecondary degrees.
- **Use of labor market data** to inform and design the work-based learning experiences and pathways for youth.

Over the next 100 days, the Lightfoot administration can do the following to support implementation:

- **Leadership and governance structure:** Provide executive and operational leadership to monitor, support, align and advocate for the cross-system/sector collaboration to support career-connected learning system.
- **Increase funding for One Summer Chicago:** Ensure that employer partner and organizations are able to increase number of paid work-based learning experiences for youth.
- **Data sharing agreement(s):** Support institutional requests and push for data sharing agreements between institutions (CPS, Rush) (CCC, CPS) to prepare for the launch of Summer/Fall 2019 programming across our institutions. This would be a start for gathering baseline data, informing outreach and marshalling additional resources to ensure equitable access to high-quality experiences for ALL.
- **Articulation agreement (s):** Support and advocate for completion of articulation agreement with City Colleges for Health Information Management & Health Sciences to Rush University by July 2019.
- **Articulated Health Sciences career pathways CPS/CCC:** Facilitate the development of the health sciences pathway program of study in collaboration with industry and education partners.
- **Community focus groups:** Gather additional input from students, families, educators and faculty to inform pathway design, options, barriers, and messaging.

For long-term implementation:

- **An outreach/marketing plan** with consistent messaging to communicate opportunities, value and benefit of career-connected learning system for all stakeholders (e.g. students and families, employers, community members, educators, etc.)
- **Defined and established metrics and benchmarks** to inform system improvement and student outcomes at secondary and postsecondary level.
- **Advocacy and state-level policy planning** to provide incentives, support funding mechanisms, integrate formal and informal learning across systems, and continue support for equitable access to high-quality learning.
- **Scaling and growing efforts with other healthcare anchor institutions** to provide annual, work-based learning experiences for up to 1,000 youth; up from our current efforts to serve over 275 youth ages 14-24.

Challenges:

- **Goal disconnect:** Siloed, disconnected goals via cross-sector stakeholders can impede collaboration and alignment efforts between CPS, CCC, and Rush – other institutions.
- **Competing priorities:** Conflict in work-based learning placement for high school and college level students; space and support for dual enrollment in higher ed and employer institutions
- **Leadership turnover:** Transition of key stakeholders and champions for the work.
- **Lack of qualified CTE Health Sciences educators:** Shortage of qualified, CTE Health Sciences instructors to meet need through traditional programs and need for credentialed-teachers to provide dual credit opportunities for students.

While this initiative is ambitious and challenging, we have a strong foundation to advance our efforts for a comprehensive healthcare career pathways system. Rush is committed to collaborating with the Lightfoot administration and all key stakeholders in shared commitment to a higher purpose of providing opportunities for students to live and thrive in Chicago.

FROM: Advance Illinois

TO: Mayor-elect Lightfoot's Education Transition Committee

DATE: April 17, 2019

OBJECTIVE: Ensuring all students have access to the quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success.

INITIATIVE: Support data-driven decision-making and invest in evidence-based innovation and talent management to create and promote instruction and supports tailored to the needs of students and communities.

How might the new administration infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative?

Chicago Public Schools has made impressive and consistent strides for its students over the past 20 years. As noted by the *New York Times*, research from Stanford University has shown that *CPS is growing its students at a faster rate than 96% of districts nationwide* between 3rd and 8th grade in reading and math. From 1995 to 2018, graduation rates have grown from under 50% to over 75%.

Even in light of this tremendous progress, the city has a long way to go to ensure that all CPS students are college and career ready, as significant equity gaps by race, income, and English-learner status start before students enter school and persist through college attainment. In working to close these gaps, data should be used as a flashlight, revealing patterns and problems and illuminating potential solutions, rather than as a hammer, punishing students, educators, or schools for poor performance, as it was in the past. This includes not only using data to guide decision-making, but also demystifying data so parents and communities can engage in the work of school improvement as true partners.

What is happening today that we need to keep?

Partnership with the Consortium: When it comes to using data to improve practice, the city of Chicago is at a unique and distinct advantage as a result of nearly 30 years of partnership with the Chicago Consortium for School Research (CCSR). The Consortium has helped identify critical levers CPS can use to improve student outcomes, including the Five Essentials Survey of school climate and culture, the Freshman on Track metric for identifying students in need of additional support, and countless research findings that have helped the district hone its strategies and practice. The city should continue to partner with the CCSR for robust and actionable research on the drivers of student and school success.

Focus on talent management: CPS has worked hard to recruit effective educators, develop a thoughtful evaluation system to provide meaningful feedback, and ensure professional development and planning time. These investments have paid significant dividends and should be continued. Pathways programs providing high school students a route to teaching careers are already underway in a handful of the city's schools and are also worth investing in and expanding.

Kindergarten readiness data collection: Data show that to close equity gaps, the city has to start early. Chicago has shown a commitment to collecting more robust and consistent data on kindergarten readiness through the observational Kindergarten Individual Development Survey (KIDS) and should continue to focus on this key indicator, ensuring teachers are trained and supported to use the tool, and the information it yields, appropriately.

Expanding pre-K: KIDS data confirms what research has revealed – it matters that we reach students early to help prevent opportunity gaps. We encourage the new team to continue work to expand pre-kindergarten.

Competency Based Education pilot: The district is currently home to 11 schools implementing Competency Based graduation requirements as part of a state pilot created by the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act. The program represents a commitment to differentiated instruction, a belief in the agency of the learner, and a commitment to ensuring students have both academic knowledge and social and emotional skills they need to thrive in adult life. The district should ensure these educators and students who are leading at the frontiers of instructional innovation have a forum to share best practices and help scale them across the district.

Strong, Stable Leadership: CPS' performance growth is no accident. It derives from coherent, informed strategies consistently applied over a sustained period of time. Importantly, Chicago students have benefitted from the city's ability to rally its many resources and agencies behind schools. And students will benefit further if we maintain a focused school board and strong leaders like Janice Jackson and Juan Salgado.

What do we need to implement in the next 100 days?

The following represent actions the district can take in the short term to drive informed decision-making on key issues.

- *Advocate for \$450 million in new school funding.* CPS is currently at 64% of funding adequacy. The Mayor-elect must join others in the state to *advocate that the state invest at least \$450 million into the Evidence Based Formula (EBF) for FY20* so that the district can continue to move toward adequate and equitable funding levels.
- *Conduct an "assessment audit"* to gain a deeper understanding of the tests schools are using to assess student progress, with a goal of streamlining assessments so that they serve a summative and formative function without overburdening teachers. (This will take longer than the first 100 days to complete but can begin during that time.)

What can we plan for longer-term implementation?

- *Ensure dollars are equitably distributed among schools:* CPS should evaluate how equitably schools are currently funded, and develop a strategy (modeled on the EBF) for combating funding inequities between schools in CPS.
- *Strengthen alignment and transitions from early childhood to K-12, especially by encouraging deeper and more consistent communication and collaboration across programs and grades.* Transitions to and through the early elementary grades are an especially vulnerable time in the educational continuum. The city should look to the state's recent Kindergarten Transition Advisory Committee report for best practices it can implement for building bridges between preK and K-12 programs around personnel, data infrastructures, and governance systems.
- *Expand trauma responsive training and supports.* Between 50% and 66% of all children experience trauma. For youth living in inner cities, the number is closer to 80%. Research underscores the need to address social and emotional issues for students to succeed. CPS should expand efforts to train and support trauma-responsive practices in its schools and work with the Center for Childhood Resilience as it develops a framework for action.
- *Build a diverse teacher pipeline.* 47% of Chicago's students are Latinx, 37% are black, and 19% are white, but Chicago's teacher workforce does not reflect this diversity. CPS also lacks sufficient special education and STEM teachers. The city should partner with local educator preparation programs and programs like Golden Apple to actively recruit, train, develop, and retain excellent, diverse teachers, especially in high need subject areas. As a long-term solution, research suggests that students recruited into the profession early, especially while in High School, may be more likely to stay in the profession. To this end, it will pay dividends for the city to launch a concerted communications initiative elevating the value of the profession, encourage the opening of Future Educators of America clubs, and invest in expanding teacher pathways work (mentioned above).
- *Deepen partnership with the City Colleges of Chicago.* Nearly 25 percent of CPS graduates who enroll in a four-year college ended up returning to Chicago and transferring into City Colleges. CPS should continue to partner with City Colleges, in particular around **early college** and **co-requisite** strategies to enrich learning and avoid remediation.

What challenges might we encounter in executing on this initiative?

The single most important factor driving any district's success – let alone one as complex and demanding as CPS – is the caliber of leadership at the district, school, and classroom level. Over the past 25 years, CPS has focused intently on growing, attracting and developing talented teachers and principals. No initiative, no matter how well articulated or intended, will deliver strong results without top-notch and focused leadership at the district level, empowered and talented principals in every school, and highly-skilled and supported teachers in every classroom.

In addition, it is important for the Mayor-elect to have a Springfield presence. Decisions made at the state level can help drive or derail investment and progress here. It is essential to be attentive and engaged and get involved at the state level, and we look forward to working with you to support Chicago students in that arena.

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: OneGoal Executive Director, Sarah Berghorst

This memo will address the following objective from the Education Transition Team's three primary objectives: **Ensuring all students have access to the quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success.**

Potential Initiative: Provide an identity affirming, holistic postsecondary access and advisory course to every CPS student that addresses both social emotional learning needs as well as knowledge and skill gaps to help every student in CPS forge a path towards their greatest postsecondary aspirations.

What Is Happening Today That We Need to Keep

At OneGoal, we believe that although talent and aspiration may be evenly distributed across the young people in our city, opportunity is not. Currently, 18% of all CPS students attain a college degree, but degree completion drops to only 13% for students who attend open-enrollment schools, while 52% of students attending selective-enrollment schools attain a degree. Opportunity is often determined by a young person's zip code, neighborhood school option, access to healthcare and nutrition as well as a host of other systemic factors. It is important for our city to have solutions for average students attending open enrollment neighborhood schools.

This is why we have worked in CPS for the past ten years to level the playing field by closing the opportunity gap for our young people, especially those whose academic profiles are not typically what society has trained us to define as "college material." Through external research studies, we have been able to prove that with the steadfast commitment and rigorous support of a caring teacher inside a high school, we can systematically close the degree divide through a three-year model in which a teacher follows their students from junior to senior year in a credit-bearing course embedded within the school day and then provides remote ongoing support to each student throughout their first year of postsecondary. Our results speak to the potential of a program like this, with 99% of our students graduating high school, 81% of our high school graduates enrolling in a postsecondary institution the fall immediately following high school graduation, and 86% of those who enroll persisting into their second year.

Currently, we are in over 70 CPS non-selective high schools but serving less than 10% of CPS juniors. Administrators regularly share with us a desire to expand our program to serve more of their students. In response to this demand, we have been piloting different program models that would allow us to serve more than 25 students per teacher. One such effort is our Full Release pilot that is testing the impact of a teacher who teaches our course full time, thus serving 100 - 125 students across five classes during the school day. We have found promising preliminary results; in our first year, the high school juniors participating in our study significantly outperformed the comparison group in attendance, GPA growth, credits earned, and credits failed.

Defining the Opportunity for Systems-Level Impact

If we could provide OneGoal, or a program like it, to every single junior in a high school who is on track to graduate, we would be able to scale our impact to close the degree divide in the city of Chicago. In our next iteration of work, we are curious about exploring the possibility of collaborating with district and local school leaders, as well as collaborative efforts like Thrive, to serve as a key lever in postsecondary strategy by providing our program "wall-to-wall" to all juniors at a number of

high opportunity schools. After a co-construction period, we hope to learn more about what it would take to make OneGoal or a course like OneGoal available for every single CPS high school junior and senior. Some of the operational pieces that would likely enable this include every junior and senior being programmed into a seminar period that could be taught by the same educator, to provide continuity of coaching conversations and support during the summer to combat “summer melt,” the prevalent phenomenon where students with a college plan decide not to go due to last-minute challenges and barriers.

Within the First 100 Days

Within the first 100 days of Mayor Lightfoot taking office, we believe it would be helpful in moving this work forward if the mayor’s office would:

- Support CPS around budget solutions to enable the staffing for a college/postsecondary seminar or advisory course for every CPS junior and senior, which would be a step in the right direction in providing systems-level solutions to closing the degree divide and the opportunity gap across neighborhoods and first-generation college-going populations.
- Recommend that CPS leaders consider partnering with OneGoal or other peer programs with externally validated results to test a wall-to-wall model with a select group of high schools.
- Collaborate with collective efforts like Thrive to put in place a support system for every young person for the critical summer after graduation where “summer melt” occurs, so that barriers are mitigated, as well as year-round efforts to help ensure that students get access to college-going supports earlier.

Planning for Longer Term Implementation

- Once we learn about the opportunity and challenge of serving CPS students at scale, we can begin to co-construct a strategy to serving all juniors within CPS. With support and additional funding from the mayor’s office, we could get this opportunity in front of students sooner rather than later.
- Help institutionalize a high-quality junior and senior-year postsecondary advisory course as a graduation requirement for CPS students that would go hand in hand with Learn, Plan, Succeed.
- Help connect OneGoal and other peer programs with ISBE to provide a recognized credential for teachers who go through our rigorous three-year training and coaching model.
- Unlock funding for this postsecondary advisory initiative to meet the needs of all CPS students and the demands of school administrators for a robust and strategic solution to supporting their students towards achieving their greatest postsecondary aspiration.

Challenges to Systematic Implementation

One of the major challenges in expanding OneGoal or a program like it to serve more students has been budgetary. To provide OneGoal as a core part of the curriculum, the school needs to have the financial capacity to staff towards a three-year college seminar class. Schools have found it challenging to find the money in their budgets to hire an additional teacher when they have so many numerous program demands. In fact, just this week, a principal shared with us, “I love OneGoal and I wish I could provide this course to every single eligible junior in my school because I know it works. But I have to look at my budget and it looks like I cannot provide more than three sections because I need this teacher to teach algebra.”

Name: Sarah E. Dennis, Ph.D., Adjunct in Early Childhood Education at UIC & Loyola University

The potential initiative: Make PreK-3rd grade developmentally appropriate and attempt to close the “achievement gap” by eliminating homework and high-stakes developmentally inappropriate testing, increasing high-quality instruction (including Reading and Writing Workshop informed by TCRWP) and adequately funded Job-Embedded Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism Professional Development (as the Mayor of NYC did, allocating \$23 million, Spring 2018 for training to all city educators by 2021). Also, redistribute funds, and increase funding significantly city-wide, using TIF funds, to schools with the greatest number of students experiencing homelessness, and receiving free/reduced lunch, to begin to address dramatic racial/class inequity in this city/CPS. Per-pupil spending is inequitable, and “Friends of” organizations contribute to vastly inequitable resources within CPS schools.

Overreliance on biased standardized developmentally inappropriate tests (Chicago must eliminate the use of MAP/NWEA/all high-stakes multiple choice/technology based standardized tests in K-3, *and* curriculum such as Heggerty for phonics in early elementary, as well as poor quality homework), lack of adequate/inequitable funding for CPS, and lack of job-embedded professional development are all contributing significantly to lack of equity, diversity, inclusion and transformation in CPS.

What is happening today that we need to keep: There are some amazing teachers and school leaders doing innovative, culturally sustaining pedagogy with inadequate resources (specifically many teachers in the Teachers for Social Justice group). Those staff, including the newly hired Director of Equity, and CEO Dr. Janice Jackson, Chief McDade, and Dr. Jane Fleming head of CPS Literacy, need to stay. All librarians and social workers need to stay, and CPS needs to triple those positions. Many local faculty, specifically at UIC and NEIU, need to stay, and be supported fiscally to continue to work with birth-higher-education teachers and future teachers.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days: Creation of multi-racial committees/focus groups with a racial/class equity lens to write policy briefs of research based recommendations, including using successes locally and nationally on various topics (a. birth-3rd grade developmentally appropriateness; b. reduction/removal of MAP/NWEA standardized tests in K-3, and replacement with LLI assessments instead; c. removal of homework in PreK-3rd; d. data

analysis on harm/damage caused by Heggerty implementation; e. Collaboration with Dr. Jane Fleming, head of Literacy for CPS, on implementation of Readers and Writer's Workshop in all CPS schools, except NOT using Erikson Institute solely as professional development providers, in coordination with TCRWP staff from NYC; f. Anti-Racism/Anti-Bias higher education faculty including Dr. Dave Stovall, Dr. Eve Ewing, Dr. Elizabeth Todd-Breeland, Dr. Erica Meiners, Dr. Isaura Pulido, Dr. Amanda Lewis, Dr. Sarah E. Dennis, Cathy Main, Dr. Adam Kennedy, to discuss anti-racism/anti-bias training for ALL staff and how to include anti-racism in the HIRING of teachers in CPS, but NOT using Beyond Diversity/Courageous Conversations or SEED as the "answer" but collaborating with CROAR and these named faculty to create CPS and education specific trainings/WITH job-embedded professional development for training that actually WORKS/has impact on children's learning/achievement. The research shows that job-embedded ongoing support is needed for growth, not just a 2-day workshop. Research also indicates that children's positive racial identity is associated with positive academic attitudes, outcomes, and engagement.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation: Revisioning of testing, curriculum, anti-racism/anti-bias needs, job-embedded professional development, and revision of funding allocations (seeking equity, where schools that need more, get more, including more social workers, school psychologists, resources for high-quality culturally relevant books/curriculum, and librarians), and much greater collaboration with higher-education faculty in the city.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative: Some business people/residents without children in CPS/well-meaning but uninformed parents may resist increasing funding and allocating more to schools that need it more; some may resist having a large amount allocated for anti-bias/anti-racism training seeing it as "unnecessary" or "unfair." Too many people are ageist (not valuing young children's ways of learning/being), and ignorant (fake "colorblind") to the racial disparities and inadequacies of current curriculum/resources (e.g., books for children to read that are MIRRORS of their own lives, this includes LGBTQ, ableism, etc). Most non-educators have swallowed the standardized testing pill, the more-technology-is-better-pill, and the Phonics-is-how-children-learn-to-read pill. These pills are making everyone sick: children, their families, and their teachers/our communities/city. The future of our city is BLEAK with the POOR quality instruction happening in PreK-3rd grade specifically. There are not any early-childhood (PreK-3rd grade in CPS) literacy folks at the highest levels informing policy that is developmentally appropriate, culturally sustaining, and effective. Heggerty and the standardized tests are making PreK-3rd grade in Chicago developmentally INAPPROPRIATE, and producing poor readers, and not critical thinkers. Chicago CAN and MUST do better!

Name: Sarah Duncan
UChicago Network for College Success

Transition Committee: Education

Objective: To ensure that all students have access to the quality schools, teachers, and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success.

Initiative: Chicago can improve its high schools to better serve our students' aspirations and intellectual capacity. Chicago's steadily rising graduation rate as well as the increasing qualifications of our graduates are unprecedented and enormous successes that deserve celebration.

However, student-level success has not been equitably distributed. We see in the data that we are serving our Black and Latino young men at a considerably lower level than that of other groups of students. Chicago has the capacity to expand on what is working and build toward greater and more equitable student outcomes. The focus on Freshman OnTrack provided the momentum for improving the average student graduation rates across the district. We now seek to leverage this impact by creating the conditions in which all Chicago students can succeed in high school and graduate prepared to achieve their postsecondary goals.

What is working:

The continuous improvement in graduation rates over the past decade has been built on three dynamic and interconnected blocks:

- Research
- Data
- Professional learning

This improvement is supported by a powerful collective of people and organizations working in concert with Chicago Public Schools.

Over a decade of investing in this approach led to a transformation in high schools. These institutions once viewed themselves as sorting bins – separating the students who had the capacity to graduate and enroll in college from those who did not. Now, high schools are learning environments that aim to foster the success of all students.

Supportive conditions:

The following research-based conditions provided the support for the observed improvement across the district:

- Opportunities for educators to learn from each other, both within and across schools

- Opportunities for educators to learn about the latest research impacting student achievement
- Prioritizing capacity-building over “implementing programs with fidelity”
- Prioritizing grades over test scores
- Prioritizing the creation and efficiency of educator teams to implement strategies for student intervention
- Developing high-quality transition supports for students moving from elementary to high school as well as from high school to college, especially for our least served students
- Using data to inform improvement efforts

Ideas that need emphasis and development:

- Careful study and implementation of practices that support the transfer of innovation within and between schools (*accountability, transparency*)
- Increasing student voice and agency in their classrooms and schools (*equity, inclusion, transformation*)
- Standards-based assessment or competency-based assessment (*equity, transparency, accountability, transformation*)
- Building a teaching force that represents the demographics (race, gender, etc.) and cultures of our student body (*equity, diversity, inclusion, transformation*)
- The importance of (especially) white teachers developing culturally responsive instructional practices (*equity, inclusion, transformation*)

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot & the Education Transition Committee
FROM: Educators for Excellence-Chicago

Initiative: Work hand-in-hand with educators to shape and implement policies that set students and teachers up for success in our schools.

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative

In Chicago, experienced educators have primarily been subjects, rather than agents of change in our schools.

Despite their on-the-ground experiences and expertise, their ideas have too often fallen on deaf ears, with just [35% of Chicago teachers saying their perspective is represented in their school](#), [32% saying this is true within their union](#), and a mere [24% saying this is true within the District or their charter network](#). It is no wonder that a staggering [93% of Chicago teachers](#) wish there were more opportunities to influence education policy.

Partnering with educators to shape and implement education policies can bring transformative change to CPS, as educators are uniquely positioned to know what students most need across our city. Their policy preferences demonstrate that they prioritize equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion. Among the bold ideas Chicago teachers support:

(1) Offer innovative compensation to recruit, develop and retain talented, diverse teachers and encourage their leadership

Chicago educators want students to have access to great teachers and classes, regardless of where in the city they live and [overwhelmingly favor structuring compensation to incentivize educators to teach in hard-to-staff schools \(90%\)](#), [serving the city's most vulnerable students](#). [Educators also want to encourage their peers to take on leadership roles](#), with 88% in favor of offering financial incentives to teachers who, for example, take on mentoring roles, serve as model teachers, develop curricula or become peer evaluators. Not only would these leadership roles help retain the [92% of Chicago teachers who wish there were more opportunities as a teacher to further their career and professional skills in the classroom](#), but they could also provide principals with added support and build a shared sense of community. In addition to salary incentives, teachers are interested in exploring [creative benefit options](#) that would lend them more financial flexibility, such as deferred compensation (i.e., a 12-month salary schedule).

(2) Ensure schools have the staff to support their unique student populations

Staffing specialized positions throughout the city is critical in order to ensure success for every student, as well for educator sustainability. Focus group participants across Chicago indicated that [these unfilled or inequitably distributed positions, such as diverse learning teachers, paraprofessionals, counselors, psychologists, and social workers, are a major concern to Chicago educators](#). For example, [with only one social worker for every 1200 students in CPS](#), educators often take on the additional responsibility of being the primary responder to student trauma. Tasked educators with the full weight of students' social, emotional and academic wellbeing [can create secondary trauma](#) and [ultimately impact educators' own mental health and sustainability](#) in the classroom. Not only should the District continue to focus on hiring the specialized staff our students need, but they should also ensure these positions are distributed to schools [based on unique student population needs](#).

(3) Provide educators with trainings to meet the needs of all students

Meeting students' diverse academic, social and emotional needs is incredibly challenging. Chicago educators are eager for professional development (PD) and training opportunities that will help them best serve their students. [Their top priority is learning more about alternatives to punitive discipline](#), along with trainings on implicit bias and trauma-informed teaching. These kinds of PD can reduce violence in our schools by addressing root causes of student misbehavior, as well as [strengthen a school's climate and culture](#). [Their second priority is for PD to help them support unique learners](#). Teachers are interested in particular in [quality](#)

[trainings for the whole staff on Individual Education Programs](#) (IEPs), specifically interpreting and implementing accommodations and modifications for students, which would ensure every student receives consistent support. As the District looks to provide meaningful trainings to best equip the teaching force, it is critical to bring educators into this process.

What is happening today that we need to keep

While there is much work to be done, the District has made some progress in partnering with educators in the interest of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation. The Office of Social Emotional Learning has hosted [Problem-Solving Forums](#), which brought together educators, District staff and community stakeholders from across Chicago to discuss issues impacting students and the teaching profession. The CPS Talent Office and Office of Safety and Security have begun to prioritize implicit bias trainings for new principals, which is an important step in ensuring students have an equal opportunity to succeed in our classrooms. The creation of the CPS Equity Office demonstrates a commitment to equity and inclusion, which holds the potential to be a critical lever for the success of teachers and students alike. Additionally, CPS' [Teacher Advisory Council \(TAC\)](#), which provides a platform for current classroom teachers to interact with District staff and help shape policy, is the embodiment of what it looks like to elevate and value teacher voice, and should continue to serve as a driver and sounding-board for District policies.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days

The first 100 days provide an opportunity to demonstrate a genuine commitment to bringing historically underrepresented stakeholders to the table and shape the future of our schools. These could include:

- Creating a Mayoral Educator Advisory Council that is made up of current classroom teachers and school staff, who could share ideas and provide feedback on current initiatives, would signal a more inclusive approach to education policy-making;
- Appointing a current classroom teacher to the Chicago Board of Education would ensure educators' invaluable perspectives are reflected in Board decisions; and
- Seizing opportunities presented by the upcoming contract negotiations with Chicago Teachers Union in order to move beyond the status quo and embrace innovative ideas broadly supported by Chicago educators.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation

Teachers are ready for transformational change, but they must be partners in this work. Longer-term implementation will require bringing teachers in at every stage of the policy-making process, allowing your administration to craft strong, effective policies and sidestep pitfalls. Simultaneously leveraging teacher expertise and cultivating their buy-in will ensure smoother and more consistent implementation across the city.

Beyond a single policy idea, program, or initiative, teachers must be authentically and consistently engaged as partners and leaders in this work. A collaborative approach would reduce historical tensions between classroom educators, District officials and the mayor's office, as well as create a shared vision of how all can work together to serve our city's students and strengthen our schools.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative

Transformative change is difficult. The very idea is often threatening to those who are invested in the status quo. But speaking directly with educators, early and often, gathering their ideas and feedback, and promoting policies that are broadly popular with those in the classroom will foster the needed buy-in to move past "what is" into "what should be." The values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation are driving forces behind what brings educators into Chicago's schools each day. Ultimately, those same values should be the yardstick by which you measure your success; if that is true, then educators will be behind you.



BUILDING BETTER LIVES

To: Mayor-elect Lori Lightfoot

From: Tasha Green Cruzat, President, Voices for Illinois Children

Mayor-elect Lightfoot,

After decades of research, we now know that the ages of 0-5 are the most critical years in a child's life when it comes to education. We also now know that only 22% of the city's children are entering kindergarten ready in the three developmental areas that are most important for a child's social and intellectual development.

Chicago Public Schools is attempting to develop an early childhood program in which all children under the age of 5 in the city can attend. This is a laudable goal, but it is also important to remember that there are non-CPS based early childhood programs that can provide high quality services to needy children in the city and help reach the goal of true universal pre-K.

One of the biggest challenges in creating a universal pre-K system is talent recruitment and maintenance. Much like the rest of the state and the entire country, there is a shortage of early childhood teachers and care workers. One such reason for this shortage is that, in private early childhood education and care centers, the wages for these workers are sparse and the benefits are non-existent. This leads to problems recruiting talent out of college and maintaining employees who leave at the first chance to go to wealthier, more funded programs in either the public or private sector.

Voices for Illinois Children proposes the creation of an insurance pool for the city's non-CPS based early childhood education and care centers that would allow for these vital workers to obtain and maintain affordable and quality health insurance.

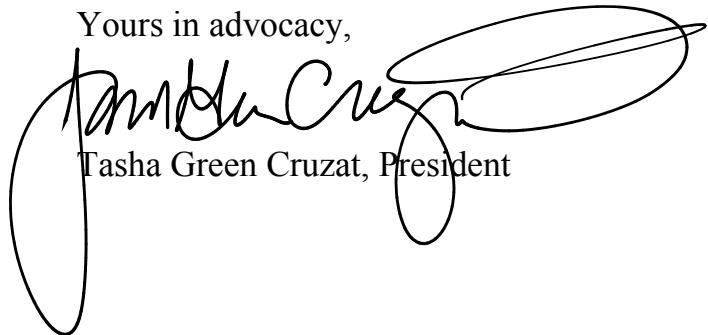
Allowing for this kind of insurance pool could prove to be transformation not just for the city but for the state. Much of the problems that face early childhood providers in Chicago are replicated throughout the state and the country. If this proposal would come into effect and provide increased economic security for these vital educators and care-givers, it could land a decisive blow against the state and nationwide teacher shortage for pre-K. This would also provide economic equity between early childhood teachers in low- and middle-income areas and high-income areas that have greater ability to provide attractive benefits. An insurance pool for early childhood workers would also provide the opportunity to open the profession to members of minority communities who might otherwise look for employment in other areas.

The city would need to establish lines of communications with the major early childhood centers throughout the city and begin the process of crafting the kind of insurance pool that these centers could afford to take part in and figuring out what kind of public investment would be needed. We would also need to reach out to the health insurance industry to see who would be interested in providing plans for such a pool and what kinds of plans would be allowed in such a system.

This is a proposal not lacking in challenges to overcome. The logistical challenges of both informing early childcare operators and their employees, as well as coming up with the financing for such a pool are of no small matter. But the great challenges we face as a city require great thinking and bold action. The status quo in early childhood education in the city cannot and should not be maintained. We can improve on the great progress made in recent years and show other communities in Illinois and the United States how to implement a pre-K system that makes robust investments in both public and private centers, provides high-quality education to our young children that promotes proper development, and gives our teachers and care-givers the economic security they deserve for taking on such an important job to our society.

On behalf of the staff and board of directors at Voices for Illinois Children, I congratulate you on your election and will proudly stand with you in your pursuit of creating a universal and high-quality early childhood education system for the children of our great city.

Yours in advocacy,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tasha Green Cruzat". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "T" on the left and "Cruzat" on the right. A small oval is drawn around the end of the signature.

Tasha Green Cruzat, President

Prompt: Ensuring all students have access to quality postsecondary options that enable them to live and thrive in Chicago.

Initiative: Strategic Plan to Roll Back Consolidation of College to Career Programs in the City Colleges and insure that educational opportunities are distributed fairly across the seven colleges.

Since 2010, the City Colleges went through a reform initiative called Reinvention. Under Reinvention the administration dismantled CCC and centralized programs ultimately disenfranchising students who were no longer able to pursue their program studies at the local college (<http://www.ccc.edu/menu/Pages/college-to-careers.aspx>). Consolidation has had an undue burden and increased safety risks on our African-American and Latinx students who have to travel long distances. While touting operational efficiency, the CCC created a centralized administrative structure that was as large, or larger, than the budget of the individual colleges.

You can see the effects of consolidation (also referred to as Centers of Excellence or Hub and Spokes) in the plummeting enrollment in the City Colleges since consolidations were implemented. CCC attendance decreased sharply, falling from 119,417 in 2010-11 to 82,384 in 2016-17. This is a decline of over 37,033 students or 31%. The fact that other suburban community colleges with smaller geographic and demographic service areas have similar offerings of thriving high quality programs suggest the Reinvention specialization approach is ill conceived.

No where is this more evident than our Nursing program. Enrollment in the CCC nursing program district-wide decreased dramatically - from 1577 students in 2010 to 331 students in 2018. This is nearly an **80% drop** in the number of students having access to the field of nursing through the City Colleges of Chicago. Once thriving and reputable nursing programs, particularly at Truman, Daley and Humboldt Park, have shut their doors, significantly limiting educational opportunities for students and thereby harming our local communities. Other Community Colleges

in the suburbs (Prairie State, Moraine Valley, Harper), offer similar core programs like Nursing and have not suffered enrollment declines.

These declines occurred because students cannot and will not travel long distances to complete their programs. It is ill-conceived to have one college be the only one that has a specialty. The City Colleges were created to serve the needs of the neighborhoods and communities. We realize that not all colleges can have all specialty programs. But, to take one C2C designation as an example, if Advanced Manufacturing is vital enough to have at Daley College on the south side, it should also be offered on the north side as well.

Our vision for a sustainable City Colleges of Chicago would include the following: 1) Halt all program closures and consolidations; 2) Create a strategic plan for reintegrating College-to-Career designations such as Information Technology at Wright College and Business at Harold Washington back to all colleges; 3) A City Colleges that respects and supports the unique identity of each of the seven colleges as expressed in the concept of “independently accredited colleges”; 5) Faculty and staff who are active participants and collaborators in the shaping of curricular offerings; 6) Colleges that are connected to the community and responsive to the needs with each college delivering a quality core set of programs; 7) So that the citizens of Chicago will have a voice in how their taxes are spent in the City Colleges, we endorse legislation that would create an elected Board of Trustees for the City Colleges.

We at the Cook County Colleges Teachers Union are encouraged that you have given us this opportunity to communicate our views. Feel free to reach out to us in the future. We look forward to future collaboration.

Name: Vanessa Lee

Transition Committee: Education Committee

In order to further the objective of ensuring all students have access to quality early childhood experiences they need to enter Kindergarten ready to learn, a potential initiative that Mayor-Elect Lightfoot may focus on would be to develop more community level early childhood collaborations. Early childhood collaborations are community-driven and focus on trying to ensure that all the children in their community are healthy and ready for school. They also provide an opportunity to bring together a diverse set of stakeholders to work on issues that their community has identified as important, and to engage in [systems building](#). Members often include child care centers, home visiting providers, and school districts, as well as medical providers, food banks, shelters, faith-based institutions, local businesses, block clubs, and public services such as libraries, park districts, and museums. Examples of issues that some existing early childhood collaborations have prioritized are: increasing enrollment in early learning programs and increasing the quality of early learning programs; the work of early childhood collaborations around such issues would undoubtedly support the Mayor-Elect's early childhood educational objective.

Early childhood collaborations are particularly needed in community areas that will be rolling out Universal Pre-Kindergarten first. There are a number of early childhood [collaborations that already exist](#) covering some of the Year 2 areas, including: Altgeld-Riverdale Early Learning Coalition, Austin Early Childhood Collaborative, Little Village Education Collaborative, North Lawndale Early Childhood Collaboration, and Southside Early Learning Network (Englewood, South Englewood, Greater Grand Crossing). However, there are significantly more communities in the Year 2 cohort that do not have any collaborations, and there are currently no known collaborations on the north side of the city. As far as current efforts that should be maintained, already-existing collaborations should be supported with financial resources and policies that encourage collaboration rather than competition.

Equity, diversity, and inclusion could be infused into supporting the development of more early childhood collaborations because at their core, collaborations are about relationships between diverse stakeholders. These stakeholders must include parents/caregivers and community members, so that those

who are the most directly impacted have a seat at the table when decisions are being made regarding early childhood services; this brings about transformation in a grassroots, community-driven way.

Collaborations can also assist with transparency and accountability, as they can act as bridges between parents/caregivers and community members, providers, and city administration to help communicate policies. A feedback loop should be built in where collaborations can inform the city administration of how policies are implemented on the ground so that adjustments can be made at the policy level if needed, and all parties involved can keep one another accountable. Another way to infuse all of the new administration's values would be to bring in a [racial equity impact assessment](#) tool to be used to vet any potential changes or new proposals so as to ensure that there are no disproportional negative impacts.

In order to make progress towards developing more collaborations, in the next 100 days a diverse group of stakeholders in each community should be pulled together so that there is a forum in which parents/caregivers, community members, providers, and others can share with the city administration what is working, what is not working, barriers, opportunities, etc. with early childhood services in their community. Longer-term implementation involving developing early childhood collaborations in each community could begin with these first meetings. In addition, a [backbone organization](#) or lead in each community should be identified to help coordinate efforts, and funding would need to be allocated to support the work of collaborations to ensure that the work is legitimized and given priority, rather than being tacked on to individuals' already existing full-time jobs and/or responsibilities.

There will likely be many challenges encountered, including the current funding structure that pits providers against one another in competition to fill their slots; there is much distrust between the different parties involved, including community members, providers, elementary schools and the city administration. Change happens at the speed of trust, and time must be dedicated to developing authentic relationships between all stakeholders. Resources need to be pushed towards early childhood, particularly for services for the birth to three age group. A [recent report](#) indicated that only 14% of children in Cook County receiving child care subsidies were in a Gold Circle of Quality program in FY17; this is just one indicator of many in which there is significant room for improvement.

Name: Veronica Rodriguez & Karina Martinez, Youth
Organizers at Brighton Park Neighborhood Council

Transition Committee: Education

Prompt:

- **A potential initiative (one sentence):**

School Resource Officers be phased out of Chicago Public Schools.

- **How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative**

In order for schools to be equitable, SROs need to be removed from our public high schools. Our Black and Brown communities are the most vulnerable and harmed when SROs are present in their schools. It is evident with cases such as the SRO assault against Dnigma Howard at Marshall High School, that police in schools does not mean safety. Chicago Public Schools and the city of Chicago cannot claim to be a sanctuary for Black, Brown, and undocumented students until police are removed from schools. True sanctuary is investment in resources for students, such as counselors, restorative justice practices, teachers, social workers, after school programs, and school infrastructure.

“There have been four IGAs signed since 2008, primarily detailing how much money CPS will pay CPD. In the 2010 IGA, CPS provided \$32.8 million over three years to CPD for school police services in 96 high schools and one special education school.”

- Handcuffs in Hallways: The State of Policing in Chicago Public Schools, Shriver Center. 2017.

Currently, there is no form of accountability for School Resource Officers. Parents, students, and the school community have no way to know which Chicago Police Officer has been assigned to their school as the Chicago Police Department has not been transparent and has no information regarding officer placement. It is possible for officers to have misconduct reports and then later be placed into these schools. These officers have little to no training before entering a school. While procedural and racial equity training is available, the training is faulty at best and not mandatory.

School Resource Officers are currently in approximately 75 Chicago Public Schools. The placement of officers in schools puts students at risk by furthering -- the school-to-prison pipeline. Chicago Police officers have access to the CLEAR and Strategic Subject List (SSL), known as the ‘gang database’, which has been proven to falsely identify people of color as gang affiliated through racial profiling, per the Office of the Inspector General. 25% of the people on the gang database were placed on the list by an officer when the individual was under 18 years of age. It is unknown whether officers have placed students on these lists, which 500 agencies, including Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Cook County Sheriff’s Office, and US Citizenship and Immigration have access to.

- And as it pertains to this initiative:

o What is happening today that we need to keep

Commented [1]: What IS happening today that we need to keep? lol. I want to say nothing. There's not a foundation set in our public schools, yet.

Commented [2]: I think that is a valid thing to say. There is no official agreement between CPS and CPD so we actually have no idea what is going on in schools.

Frankly, our education system has not been equitable for our Black and Brown students. While platforms like, Local School Councils, have allowed for community input into how schools are run, this is not enough.

o What we need to implement in the next 100 days |

Within the first 100 days, it is vital to have an accountability and reflection process for all the SROs that were placed in a school. Secondly, during that same amount of days, students who were harmed by SROs deserve reparations. In order to address the public about this issue, what can be organized is a press conference or a public hearing. Through this way of communication people, especially parents, can be given an understanding as to what and why the city chose to phase SROs out of public schools. The dialogue can address the necessity for community input and being able to work together internally. It can look like students, teachers and community members creating a de-escalation plan for any danger. It can look like healing circles amongst students. Having counselors, teachers and restorative justice mediators building relationships with students and creating practices that ensure the mental, physical and emotional well being of every student.

o What we can plan for longer-term implementation

For longer-term implementation we should anticipate to create more hiring and placement of counselors, social workers, teachers and restorative justice mediators at our schools. This will eliminate the process of pushing students out through the zero tolerance and school to prison pipeline, by providing resources and people that are accessible to the students.

o What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative |

Some challenges that can be encountered are explaining different perspectives on safety. Police are immediately associated with safety. It's possible to have community dialogues and introducing examples of restorative, transformative justice, community first response and having safe passage people trained for crisis intervention, trauma healing, and non-violence practices by organizations who are running programs and practices that encourage community building and working.

Commented [3]: In the next 100 days, we want our public schools to phase out SROs and be replaced with counselors and social workers. We need to stop the push-out of Black and Brown bodies by overpolicing and punishing them through expulsion or suspension. Instead, our most vulnerable students need to be welcomed and introduced towards healing and transformative justice so that the same "mistakes" are prevented.

Commented [4]: We can talk about how SROs still need all of the CONSISTENT training in the world, BUT that doesn't mean that they have to play multiple roles. Police need to stay in the streets. Not in our schools.

Commented [5]: We can mention the consent decree. CPD has deadlines that they have to meet regarding police in schools.

Commented [6]: Parents. We have security guards. Creating a de-escalation plan with community and student input.

Mayoral Education Transition Team

Name: Rebecca Vonderlack-Navarro, PhD and Cindy Camacho, MA - Latino Policy Forum

Transition Committee: Education

Prompt: The City of Chicago's goal of universal preschool for four-year-olds is laudable. However, if the long-term implementation process excludes community providers from serving three- and four-year olds, it will compromise parents' freedom to choose what setting best meets the needs of their children and will harm working families in Chicago. Community based organizations offer full-day, full-year, high-quality birth-to-five programming and extensive services for the whole family. Organizations must have genuine input in the roll out process of universal preschool. This will ensure that working families do not suffer the loss of extended hours and wraparound services.

What is the potential initiative? A universal preschool program that ensures the long-term preservation of slots for three-and four-year olds within both schools and licensed community organizations.

How can the new administration infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative?

Chicago could be a leading city in the nation serving all three and four-year olds in preschool programs, thereby ensuring a greater degree of kindergarten readiness and overall academic success. To accomplish this goal, the overall long-term capacity of CPS schools and community providers to accommodate early childhood students must be analyzed with an overarching goal of preserving a mixed delivery model (i.e. both schools and community providers). This analysis would help promote equity, transparency, and accountability.

For English Learners (ELs), a priority group under Title I, access to quality preschool programs where instruction can be offered in the home language is fundamental to their success. ELs must be placed in schools and/or community-based organizations where bilingual staff is available to serve them.

Supporting a true mixed delivery system will provide the best outcomes for children and their families who are underserved in Chicago. Community-based organizations have long promoted diversity and inclusion along with upholding a transformative view of neighborhoods. Over the past century, community-based organizations in Chicago have been long-standing pillars offering a myriad of vital comprehensive services, supports, and programs. Through quality and flexible programming, they meet children's developmental needs, build on racial, cultural and linguistic identity, and provide an array of services for the entire family, such as: workforce development, mental health support, preventative health care, adult education, immigration services, and nutritional services.

And as it pertains to this initiative:

1. What is happening today that we need to keep?

Preserve parental choice and options for the delivery of UPK in community-based settings. Both community providers and schools share the provision of services so that a continuity of care can be preserved for children and families, ensuring the strongest return on investments in early childhood education. Longstanding research has shown that children have better educational and developmental outcomes when there is continuity in their childcare arrangements. Safe, stable environments allow young children the opportunity to develop the relationships and trust necessary to comfortably explore and learn within their surroundings. If the roll out of universal preschool prioritizes school settings, the continuum of care for numerous families throughout the city could be disrupted. In a time of tumultuous immigration threats and school closures, communities will be further destabilized if these anchor institutions are forced to shut their doors or curtail their services.

The exclusion of community providers from universal preschool could threaten the viability of these organizations to serve birth-to-three-year-olds. As organizations rely on numerous funding sources to support programming, many will not have the financial capacity to continue serving that crucial age group. Additionally, most provider facilities are not designed to solely serve children below the age of three and doing so would require substantial capital investments that community providers do not have, particularly following the sustained budget impasse in Illinois.

2. What we need to implement in the next 100 days?

- Conduct analysis of supply and demand for preschool slots inclusive of both schools and community providers. Information must be public and disseminated to providers and families. In this vein, DFSS should publicize their focus groups findings of what linguistically and culturally diverse families desire in early childhood services. The new administration will want to be judicious about the data's validity.
- Include substantive and ongoing input from community providers regarding the roll out of universal preschool. Discussions should consider the short timeframe and limited ability for providers to plan given the current RFP timeline.
- Articulate how the roll out will address the shortage of qualified staff and teachers needed to serve culturally and linguistically diverse children within both school and community organizations.
- Review and evaluate the current on-line enrollment process and the barriers it might cause for low-income and Latino families.

3. What we can plan for longer-term implementation?

Develop a long-term plan to deal with compensation parity for teachers in school- and community-based settings.

- Develop a long-term plan for capital investments in both school and community settings.
- Develop a long-term plan to deal with the early childhood teacher shortage, particularly bilingual early childhood teachers.
- Strengthen and implement policies to ensure immigrant families are secure and safe in enrolling their child in educational services.
- Partner with stakeholders to develop a public campaign to promote the benefits of early childhood services and education.
- Assess and monitor the proposed three year roll out of UPK to ensure that all concerns in this memo are addressed.

4. What challenges we might encounter in executing this initiative?

There is a concern that the implementation of universal preschool creates unnecessary competition between community providers and public schools. It is not an either/or dichotomy, but a both/and approach that is best for Chicago and families. Prior to 2016, all preschool services were under the administration of CPS. The subgranting of preschool to community providers under the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) was designed to reduce duplicity. This structure, however, has lessened community provider input.

DFSS public meetings with providers have been primarily informational, not intended for community leader input and shared decision-making. This approach limits the opportunity to strategize with school and community partners, to develop community plans that can best serve families. It is only together, that a unified and thoughtful action plan to reach universal preschool can be achieved.

Memo**Name:**

Dr. Lisa Walker, University of Illinois at Chicago – Urban Education Leadership Program

Dr. Steve Tozer, University of Illinois at Chicago – Urban Education Leadership Program

Benjamin Boer, Independent Consultant, Previously with Advance Illinois

Transition Committee: Education**Prompt:** Accountability and Support**A potential Initiative:** Identifying and Supporting High Churn Schools**How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:**

The new administration can support equity, diversity and inclusion by providing the resources and support necessary for understanding and developing strategies for the improvement of schools serving the highest concentrations of students who live in poverty and who tend to be the most marginalized and isolated in the system. Chicago Public Schools uses its accountability system to identify schools that struggle to help students grow to their potential. By using data on poverty and student mobility, CPS can better understand which schools struggle with these conditions and work with school leaders from schools that have successfully overcome these challenges and those that are trying to improve. Such a strategy will be necessary to create systematic solutions to the issues of high student mobility and chronic truancy/absenteeism that have made some schools consistently the most difficult to improve.

CPS has invested in preparing and developing school leaders for well over a decade. This strategy has contributed to performance growth of students, which a recent study by Sean Reardon of Stanford University shows is substantially greater on average for students in grade three through eight in Chicago than trends nationwide. Recent work done by the University of Illinois at Chicago Center for Urban Education Leadership, which is affiliated with UIC's EdD program in Urban Education Leadership, suggests that some of the most poorly performing schools in the city have the greatest school improvement challenges and it has been difficult to develop leaders that can respond to these issues.

UIC has developed a method for identifying schools that face the greatest challenges to improvement using three non-academic indicators: student mobility, chronic truancy/absenteeism, and homeless student rates. It has categorized CPS elementary schools into three groups using these indicators to describe student population instability: high-churn, borderline churn, and stable. UIC estimates there are 125 high-churn elementary schools in the district and 255 stable schools.

Approximately 50% of high-churn schools have been unable to sustain an acceptable accountability rating of 2+ over the last 5 years and are not in Good Standing. Moreover, most schools in Provisional and Intensive Support in the CPS accountability system are high-churn schools. This contrasts with "stable" schools that, with few exceptions, have tended to earn ratings between 2+ and 1+ on the accountability system over the past five years and are overwhelmingly in Good Standing. This analysis links characteristics that create school improvement challenges for school and system leadership to the

accountability system that identifies schools struggling to improve student performance. It raises key questions on how to prepare, develop, and support school leaders to produce stronger outcomes in these schools and develop system leaders to support this work.

By surfacing questions, developing additional metrics to characterize high churn schools, and supporting processes to explore the deeper causes of poor performance related to those metrics, the new administration can maintain accountability and transparency – but repurpose its goals towards support and improvement processes within CPS to address the leadership challenges of chronically struggling schools.

And as it pertains to this initiative:

What is happening today that we need to keep:

The districts' emphasis on instructional leadership has been key to its success over the last 15 years. Any initiative should maintain this as a key leverage point. In the context of high churn schools, working with leaders to address leadership challenges will be key to cracking the code on how to help these schools improve.

The current SQRP system should be evaluated to assess whether it is achieving the purposes for which it is designed. However, it seems to appropriately identify schools that have low growth for their students. Better information and discussion could be provided to probe the meaning of this data. The goal should be to create an accountability system less focused on the fact of low-performance of individual schools and more focused on initiating a process of diagnosis for why the schools are struggling to improve and what can be done at the school and system level to address these challenges.

Note that many of the schools in Chicago identified as high churn are also identified as low-performing on the state accountability system and are receiving additional dollars for improvement.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days:

Over the next 100 days the district should increase its analysis of the characteristics of the lowest performing schools. This would further develop the definition of high churn schools, develop improved diagnostics and analytics of high churn schools that have done poorly on the district's accountability system, and determine other common characteristics of these schools. In particular, we would ask the administration to focus in on the concept of "high churn" schools, which we elaborate further at the end of the memo.

Over the next 100 days, the district should identify and begin to assess policies that are intended to encourage educational stability or that may contribute to churn and the way they interact (or supportive of each other or not) to support students and families served by high-churn schools. It is not clear whether these issues are resolvable by individual school leaders.

This work in the first 100 days would allow for the development of a larger initiative regarding high churn schools and identification of strategies and approaches to help support these schools. Note that some of the strategies for improvement could include changes in policy such as allowing students to stay in schools regardless of attendance boundaries.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation:

The longer term implementation plan to improve high-churn schools would be to develop leadership supports and strategies for both system and school leaders designed specifically for the challenges that high-churn schools address. By networking and engaging school leaders in developing improvement strategies and measuring these strategies, using a continuous improvement model, leaders can begin to learn from each other about what works and does not in these environments and the system and its partners can begin to document these solutions to support them in going to scale. UIC has begun this process of investigating the challenges of high-churn schools with a cohort of leaders and in the spirit of the concept of “improvement science,” is starting small to learn fast.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative:

Some challenges for this initiative:

- The literature on appropriate interventions for high-churn schools is limited. That requires that school leaders should be helped to develop solutions based on root cause analysis and measure both the implementation and outcomes of their solutions. This is intensive work that many school leaders have not yet participated in.
- For a variety of reasons, data collection, tracking, monitoring, and utilization for improvement purposes is likely to be more challenging for the population of students and families served by high-churn schools.

High churn is an indicator of instability in daily attendance and enrollment of a school's student population and includes educationally vulnerable students as an important dimension. Accountability measures indicate that schools with high churn are harder to improve than schools with stable student populations. Student mobility is the leading indicator of churn, but in the interest of using multiple sources of information related to what the research literature refers to as “homeless and highly mobile students,” UIC also uses indicators of chronic truancy and homeless students. We have found the resulting churn indicator is more predictive of school accountability status than mobility rates alone. Illinois just started collecting data for a chronic absenteeism indicator and we will explore how to include that in our churn indicator.

FROM: Aarti Dhupelia
TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot
TRANSITION COMMITTEE: Education

OBJECTIVE: Increase postsecondary success so all who want to can live in and thrive in Chicago

Current work to keep/enhance:

- *Chicago College & Career Advising Credential program to train CPS school counselors and postsecondary staff/partners in best practice postsecondary advising.* This was built collaboratively with CPS, postsecondary, nonprofit, and funder partners and has strengthened staff capacity and improved many college-going metrics.
- *Learn.Plan.Succeed goal to ensure every student graduates CPS with a concrete postsecondary plan.* Because postsecondary education significantly improves the likelihood of career success and positive life outcomes, CPS has set the right expectation by requiring students to graduate CPS with plans beyond high school graduation.
- *STAR Scholarship.* This is valuable for students' high school to college (CPS to CCC) transition as well as for students transferring from CCC to 4-year colleges, with transfer articulation agreements in place between CCC and several 4-year colleges. Also, continued inclusion of undocumented students in STAR eligibility is critical.
- *Growth in Dual Credit, Dual Enrollment, and AP.* CPS has made great strides on this front. Accelerate goals for every student to engage in college-level coursework before graduation. Invest in teacher training to credential more teachers to teach dual credit in high schools, in collaboration with local higher education institutions.
- *Computer Science for All.* Computer Science is the fastest growing labor market, and CPS is a national leader in its efforts to engage all students in CS during K-12. Going forward, build articulation agreements not only with CCC but also with 4-year colleges to accelerate students on multiple paths to college/career success in CS.
- *Social and Emotional Learning (SEL).* CPS has invested significant resources in supporting schools in climate/culture building and in supporting students' development of SEL skills. In addition to academic skills development and postsecondary planning, SEL skill development is critical for postsecondary success, and CPS should continue to prioritize investment in SEL programs such as Second Step, PATHS, etc.
- *Career and Technical Education (CTE), including Early College STEM High School (ECSS) model.* Progress has been made to align the CPS CTE program portfolio with high growth labor market areas. The strongest existing CTE programs in CPS have strong ties to industry and postsecondary partners (e.g., Chicago Ag High School, select Health Sciences programs, and Early College STEM Schools). For future programs, anchor partners are critical.
- *Research to Practice collaboration with UChicago UEI and Network for College Success.* This partnership has embedded evidence-based, data-driven best practices across CPS and has directly contributed to increases in freshman on-track, high school graduation, and college enrollment rates over the past 10-15 years.

Initiatives to implement in the next 100 days:

- *Establish public goal of Chicago becoming the Equity in College Success City,* undergirded by a series of specific initiatives/investments to support equity in postsecondary success for young people and adults across the city. 60% of adults holding a college degree is a common goal being used in state and national initiatives and could be considered as an overall citywide goal in tandem with a goal of closing equity gaps.
- *Invest in more school counselors and postsecondary coaches.* CPS has an ambitious set of postsecondary strategies and goals and has made significant strides over the past 10-15 years in high school graduation and college enrollment rates; however, according to national best practices, there are far too few counselors for the number of students enrolled in CPS, and this limits the progress that can be made. An investment priority should be to set a goal/requirement of a much lower student/counselor ratio across schools, with additional postsecondary coaches or nonprofit partners also targeted to higher-need high schools in order to drive equity.
- *Increase funding to subsidize summer internships for CPS high schoolers.* This will help to build students' college/career readiness and drive their summer engagement, and it will incent more employers to hire high schoolers.
- *Mandate/incent employer engagement with local higher education institutions (4-year and 2-year colleges) to provide internships/apprenticeships and equity of access to career opportunities to minority, low-income, first-generation college goers (i.e., under-represented students).* Every year, thousands of bachelor's degree earners, in particular under-represented students, do not secure a first job after college that yields a family-supportive wage or positions them for upward mobility. A major barrier is that under-represented students often lack the professional social network to get a foot in the door. The City could offer incentives (e.g., internship subsidy, tax

benefits, etc.) or otherwise publicly encourage employers to partner with colleges (4-year and 2-year) to establish more diverse talent pipelines in industries across the city, in businesses/nonprofits big and small.

- *Build CPS Grow Your Own Teachers program.* Partner CPS with local colleges (4-year and 2-year) to create dual credit teacher preparation programs in CPS high schools, creating an accelerated path to a bachelor's degree in education, and guaranteeing student teaching placements in CPS schools during a student's college career and eventual employment in a CPS school after college graduation. This would build the diversity of CPS' teacher workforce while preparing CPS students for meaningful employment that gives back to Chicago communities.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation:

- *Establish College Re-Engagement Centers across the city to engage/re-engage adults and college stop-outs back into college:* There are hundreds of thousands of Chicago adults who have started college but not completed their associate's or bachelor's degree, and every year thousands of students graduate CPS but do not immediately enroll in college; yet, there is no city-wide strategy/system to help adults find their best-fit college option once they are disconnected from high school. This is an untapped talent goldmine. Much like CPS has high school drop-out re-engagement centers, and the city/county has workforce development centers, college re-engagement centers should be established throughout the city (perhaps co-located in workforce agencies). College advisors in these centers would help adults explore their career interests and choose their path and the right college option (2-year and/or 4-year college). In parallel, the City could offer scholarships (perhaps subsidized by companies with talent shortages) for adults to pursue degrees in high-growth/vacancy job areas. Furthermore, colleges that have demonstrated a commitment to serving underserved students and working adults well, i.e., colleges with strong persistence and career supports for non-traditional students, will be highlighted/prioritized in advising efforts (much like CPS prioritizes "high graduation rate" colleges in advising).
- *Infuse college coursework and "developmental education" (i.e., remediation) into the senior year of high school so that more students are ready to hit the ground running and can skip remediation in college.* Partner with 4-year colleges and CCC to build a senior year English and Math curriculum that prepares students for their freshman year of college. This includes making a 4th year of Math required in CPS.
- *College and Career Counseling Suites:* Establish a college/career counseling center (i.e., lab) in every high school with the technology, resources, and staff to help students explore and pursue their postsecondary aspirations. Many schools have these, but many more need them, especially in higher-need communities.
- *Expand One Million Degrees or similar coaching/student support model across CCC.* Strengthen persistence supports and graduation rates across CCC by training CCC advisors to employ OMD's coaching model. Capacity should be built in-house in CCC in order to more rapidly and efficiently scale positive student outcomes.

How we can infuse our values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation:

- *Equity, Accountability, Transparency:* Establish an Equity Dashboard/Heat Map that measures inputs for every CPS/CCC/DFSS initiative, i.e., how dollars are spent across communities, and how well they are concentrated in areas of higher need. In addition, create an Equity Scorecard, to measure outputs/outcomes. Data on key performance indicators related to college-going, college-success, employment, and early indicators on the path toward postsecondary (e.g., success in AP, IB, dual credit, career certification) should be published annually on the district's website and disaggregated by community/race/gender, to shine a light on equity gaps in order to target resources/strategies where needed. For example, if college-going rates are relatively low in a given community, we should target that community with an increase in college counseling/college access resources.
- *Diversity and Inclusion:* Commit to a recurring series of Mayor's community meetings across the city throughout her term so that as many voices as possible can be heard and so that continuous feedback can be sought.
- *Equity and Transformation:* Drive toward a goal of a Level 1/1+ school in every neighborhood within 3 years. Setting such an ambitious goal would drive a laser focus on where investments are needed with an urgency that would quickly advance more equitable distribution of resources (e.g., through additional staffing, incentivizing high-performing staff or new hires to work in specific schools, infusing special programming or new facilities, etc.)

Challenges we might encounter:

- Resource limitations.
- Insufficient employer engagement to grow internship and career opportunities.
- Inadequate mental health counseling resources in K-12 and colleges – another investment opportunity.



Education Transition Committee Memo

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot
From: Adelric McCain, Director of Equity and Impact

In order to ensure that all (especially our least served -- black and brown) students have access to the best, most engaging, inspiring, and supportive school communities necessary for their success, there needs to be professional learning programs offered to all CPS staff and required by all leadership (school administrators, network leads and district leads) that explicitly trains them in anti-racist, equity-centered, transformational practice.

The city of Chicago has experienced significant gains in essential student outcome data as measured by *Freshman On-Track*, which has led to increased high school graduation rates.ⁱ Additionally, the hard work of teachers, staff, administrators, and communities, has led to increases in college entrance and persistence – meeting or competing with national averages.ⁱⁱ While the city has a number of reasons to be proud, the success is not shared across racial and geographical lines within the city. Moreover, certain groups of students (Black and Latinx boys) are being tremendously underserved in our current school system. One alarming example of the dis-education of our black and brown boys is that in school year 2016-17, the entering Latinx male 9th graders with a 3.5 or higher GPA ended the year losing an average of a half a point. For our Black boys the outcomes were more devastating – losing close to an average of three-quarters of their previous 3.5 GPA.ⁱⁱⁱ The data tells a very unfortunate narrative, that if you are a student who comes from a particular race and/or live in particular neighborhoods your educational experience in the city of Chicago will differ from that of your peers – leading to disparate life outcomes.

Of Mayor-Elect Lightfoot's objectives for education there are two that closely tie together. While access to quality Pre-K education is essential, to increase postsecondary success for all of Chicago Public School (CPS) students, there must be access to quality schools where the teachers, staff, administrators, and community partners provide holistic, culturally responsive, and anti-racist academic and social emotional education/support. Efforts to transform our city's current practices, values and beliefs necessitates all stakeholders' exploration of two essential questions: *what are the current values and beliefs that are embedded in CPS' policies, initiatives, programs, curriculum, and instructional practices that create the racial disparities in students' outcomes and educational experiences? And, what are the necessary resources and steps to identify, address and transform current inequitable practices and beliefs damaging our black and brown youth in CPS?*

Systems change is tremendously challenging; however, transforming the practices and policies, while surfacing and interrogating the mindsets and beliefs of individuals working in that system would make shifts in a system more attainable. Creating anti-racist learning spaces for the adult stakeholders in CPS, while offering equity centered coaching supports for administrators and district level staff would be a vehicle to drive the change previously mentioned. A professional learning model that includes the following functions, structures and practices would result in the necessary change for our least served communities:

- Engage in critical cycles of inquiry (using both quantitative and qualitative data) to identify root causes of inequities throughout student's educational experience (i.e. Gregory Peters' Teacher Transformation Framework).^{iv}
- Increase our "equity literacy" through engaging in learnings and practices that involve codified frameworks. (i.e. Paul Gorski's "Five Principles of Equity Literacy").^v
- Interrogate current and operating ideologies, beliefs, policies, and instructional practices using a vetted anti-racist framework.

- Audit/assess new policies and practices using vetted anti-racist/equity centered rubrics or frameworks to codify for spread and scale throughout the district.
- Genuinely and authentically partner with CPS families and community based organizations to inform and shape goals and practices
- Transform our current understanding, practice and experience with accountability from the top down mandated dynamic to a collective, shared practice that authentically localizes control with black and brown families and communities.
- Community Equity Committees that engage in similar professional development, data collection, and equity walks to inform recommendations

As it relates to process and implementation of such an initiative, there are current actions that support such an endeavor. As a district we should continue to develop and sustain the networks of stakeholders working in Chicago's education landscape (policy, advocacy, pre-service training/higher ed., professional practice, and school and district based) who are fiercely addressing anti-racist work, equity-centered work (i.e. the new Office of Equity's Instructional Working Group). In addition, we should build on current partnerships with national networks of equity-centered educational organizations and programs (e.g. BELEN, Teachers for Social Justice, School Reform Initiative).

Looking to the near future there are activities that would support the transformation process and support the mayor-elect's goal of transparency and equity. There is a significant need to reassess current policies, using a data based inquiry approach, to expeditiously address the school practices that are directly contributing to disparate outcomes for black and brown students. (e.g. Uniform and Discipline Code, application to selective schools and programs). Additionally, we as a district need to research and select common principles and common anti-racist/equity centered frameworks that we should operationalize across the district in order to develop calibration and coherency. There are currently several models being employed, which create confusion. Lastly, it would be optimal to shorten one school day a week for collaborative staff and faculty learning and cycles of inquiry.^{vi}

In regards to longer-term plans, the city must develop a sustainable pipeline (partnering with higher ed. programs) to recruit, train, and retain quality black and brown educators (with a significant emphasis on Black and Latinx males). Efforts such as the Black Teachers Project has proven successful in getting quality professionals that reflect both the identity and experience of the young people we serve.^{vii} By engaging in transformational learning with adult CPS stakeholders, it would lead to a critical examination of several current practices and policies that prevent all CPS students from experiencing their right to a quality education. Our city must investigate the role that selective enrollment (and charter schools) are playing in the devaluation of our neighborhood schools. There are a number of specific efforts that should be reviewed that would balance the right for families to choose the school community they want for their children with the need to have diverse and rich learning communities in every single neighborhood in Chicago.

For the past 19 years that I have been an educator in Chicago, I have yet to be in working spaces (besides small school teams) that addressed institutional and systemic racism head on and/or explicitly. I have experienced working with people who are in positions of leadership who have been stoic in preventing the work around school improvement that explicitly wrestles with issues of systemic racism. These leadership detours have resulted in initiatives that center diversity and celebration of culture as the end goal sanitizing the need to interrupt and transform racist practices. In order to address the current needs related to equity and education in our city, we need to remove the resistance to talk candidly about race and racism as it relates to school improvement. The additional challenge I see the city facing as it looks to execute an initiative such as this would be addressing the sense of loss felt/experienced by some communities. There are some communities that fundamentally do not believe that their child should get less in order for all to get more. Resistance all the way to full out blockage has been a consistent reality when it is determined that in order to address the needs of our least served communities, some will have to have less access to previously entitled resources. There has to be a healing process for all members of our educational community as we seek construct a more just and equitable educational experience.

- ⁱ <https://toandthrough.uchicago.edu/tool/cps/2018/#/milestones>
- ⁱⁱ https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cpa.asp
- ⁱⁱⁱ <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/publications/hidden-risk-changes-gpa-across-transition-high-school>
- ^{iv} <http://edd.sfsu.edu/content/dr-gregory-peters>
- ^v <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/apr19/vol76/num07/Avoiding-Racial-Equity-Detours.aspx>
- ^{vi} <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2015/09/16/give-teachers-time-to-collaborate.html>
- ^{vii} <https://www.blackteacherproject.org/>

MEMO

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot
Name: Alexios Rosario-Moore
Transition Committee: Education

Prompt: Ensure all students in CPS have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed.

Proposed Initiative: GoCPS Equity and Transparency Committee

This memo proposes the formation of a **GoCPS Equity and Transparency Committee** made up of researchers, parents, teachers, and counselors empowered to access and analyze enrollment data in order to assess the effects of common enrollment through an equity lens that incorporates race/ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and ability status.

The Problem

GoCPS is a common enrollment system promoted as a tool to simplify the application process, increase access to higher performing schools, and reduce preferential treatment for well-connected families. Advocates of free-market models like the Center on Reinventing Public Education describe the mechanism as a way to “make school choice work.” When paired with student-based budgeting, common enrollment increases the efficiency of the free-market process. In theory, when informed parents and students choose high performing schools, then those schools will expand or multiply while low-performing schools will be forced to close as students—and funding—flow to the higher performing schools. While the instability baked into the district’s portfolio model is inherently unhealthy for children and communities, a wholesale critique of the district’s overall strategy is outside the scope of this memo. More immediately, this proposal intends to increase transparency and equity in the district’s enrollment policy through a robust, public and iterative analysis of enrollment data that informs the GoCPS re-design on an annual basis.

Advocates of common enrollment in other cities argued these reforms might lead to greater levels of access for low-income students of color, but recent research by Measure of America and profiled in the [New York Times](#) demonstrates that common enrollment makes enrollment process more efficient at what it has always done: sort students according to race, ethnicity and socioeconomic background. CPS has been explicit in communicating that GoCPS is not intended to address segregation and stratification, but the new process may be exacerbating segregation and stratification when it has the potential to reduce inequity of access and outcome. Although the policy is ostensibly race/ethnicity and SES neutral, it may be having a disparate impact across populations which creates the potential for a legal challenge under the state constitution.

After implementing common enrollment systems, both Denver and Newark saw increased competition for the already limited seats in high-performing schools located in wealthier communities, while neighborhood school enrollment in largely African-American and Latinx communities declined. In Denver, targeted adjustment of enrollment boundaries failed to increase racial, ethnic and socioeconomic diversity, while Newark recognized that the enrollment disparity between wealthy and low-income communities was unsustainable. Both school boards created

committees that included parents, community members and policy-makers to evaluate and propose reforms to common enrollment policies. The Denver School Board formed the Strengthening Neighborhoods Committee to study the intersection of housing and school segregation and make intended to address gentrification and strengthen neighborhood public schools. In Newark, the school board formed a committee to study the issue and voted to dismantle the single application process. While many cities are critically examining the impact of this seemingly race-neutral mechanism on African-American and Latinx communities, the first report authored by the Consortium on School Research focused on “whether the GoCPS process worked as intended” and “which programs were in high demand.” While the process may be working as it was intended to, some unintended consequences for students with IEPS have already been documented in the Raise Your Hand report authored by Dr. Federico Waitoller “[High School Application and Placement for Chicago Public School Students with Disabilities: A Research Report from RYH.](#)”

The Remedy

The GoCPS Equity and Transparency Committee could be a mayoral initiative housed in what I imagine might be a new Department of Equity and Civic Engagement or be empaneled by the CPS School Board. While the new process has had profound affect on schools and families, access to enrollment data has been restricted to the Consortium on School Research whose study designs have been circumscribed by the district. This committee would introduce transparency through the public work of the committee, equity through potential revisions to the process, inclusion by involving those most affected by the policy, and accountability by generating equity-based evaluation criteria that may be incorporated into the district’s annual review. GoCPS constitutes a massive and ongoing policy experiment without inclusion, transparency, or robust analysis. This committee, properly empowered and constituted, may bring transformation to the enrollment system.

Timeline

While CPS formed a committee in response to this proposal, that committee focused on implementation and efficiency, is purely advisory, and should be disbanded. Formation and design of the new committee could be initiated within the first 100 days. With access to the past two years of data, and in partnership with researchers, the committee could be formed and defined over the summer and begin analysis during the fall. The first report could be ready by the spring in time to inform the fall 2020 iteration of GoCPS. This cycle of inquiry would repeat on an annual basis and potentially expand into addressing enrollment boundaries and school actions.

Challenges

This proposal would require a willingness from CPS to engage in a systemic equity analysis. The Chief Equity Officer has indicated that the office is working to build up capacity and is focused on programming and instruction. Some incentive for participation must be built into the relationship between the mayor’s office and CPS. In addition, a robust analysis would benefit from the participation of researchers beyond a pro-bono level of engagement which may require a research budget, but external funding might be another option given the complexity and scope of the policy’s impact on our communities.

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot, Education Transition Committee
FROM: Acasia Wilson Feinberg

Dear Education Transition Committee Co-chairs:

I am writing to share two recommendations that I believe could support Mayor-elect Lightfoot's administration in improving educational outcomes for students in our city while promoting the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity, inclusion, and transformation.

In order to ensure **all students in CPS have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed**, I recommend a comprehensive approach to recruiting, developing, and retaining talented, effective educators in Chicago that is carried out across multiple city agencies. While the district initiatives currently underway provide important steps forward, (i.e. Teach 2025, teacher residencies) the city can use its unique position to carry out complimentary strategies and push for change at greater scale. The city could then leverage the new teacher talent gained to meet the district's stated goals and carry out innovative pilots to do things such as reduce class size in critical grade levels, subject areas, etc.

Teachers seeking to work in CPS may be discouraged by an uncertain financial picture related to benefits and compensation over time. My recommended solution to this challenge is twofold:

In the short-term, the administration should appoint a diverse committee of stakeholders to **create a set of recommendations for addressing the fiscal challenges facing current and future Chicago teachers**. The committee should be assembled, and the recommendations made in a timeframe of 18 months or less.

Key actions:

1. Select a committee in the first 100 days.
2. Meet with committee and provide avenues to broader community engagement and input.
3. Publicly share and begin to take action on the recommendations.
4. Communicate clearly and confidently about the short and long-term benefits to teaching in Chicago to current and future teachers.

At the same time, the city should **create avenues to identify, provide incentives to, and celebrate teachers making a contribution to the teaching profession and to our city** through their work with students. This will ultimately enable the city to attract and retain more educators and work to specifically focus on recruiting and retaining educators of color and educators for high-need geographies and subject areas.

Key actions:

1. Build relationships with current recognized teacher leaders, such as the Teacher Advisory Council within CPS.
2. Support annual teacher-driven conversations through a Community Trust "On the Table" type approach. These conversations would be centered on success with students with the aim of lifting up the great work of teachers, building community among educators, and identifying ways that the city can further support great teaching. The synthesis of these conversations could be shared back across the city in order to share best practices and spur innovation.
3. Publicly recognize teachers who are having a positive impact on the profession and on their community in board meetings, city events, city announcements, etc. so that teaching in Chicago is seen as a high-profile and highly desirable role.

Additionally, in order to **ensure that all students in CPS have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed**, I recommend ensuring that Chicagoans across all communities are supported to have greater access to and participation in their neighborhood schools.

Structures such as Local School Councils, CACs, the FACE office, etc. seek to increase community participation in schools and communication between the district, parents and communities, but ultimately have not effectively and efficiently delivered on this aim.

In the short term, to establish trust, communication and community engagement, the city should **provide ways for parents to directly engage in their child's school that are accessible**. As a CPS parent, I have experienced short conferences with limited windows to engage. Parents would benefit from more opportunities to take part in school conferences. To that end, I recommend that the administration considers giving all city employees the opportunity to leave work for a designated period of time to take part in parent/teacher conferences so that all city parents can gain a deeper understanding of what is happening in their child's education and school. Furthermore, the city should encourage all employers to provide this benefit to their workforce. Through these actions, the city can show that it is committed to providing real accessibility for parents to engage in their school community. In terms of key actions, I believe this is an easy and immediate win requiring few steps to move forward in the next 100 days. That said, additional teacher conference days may be needed given that it will likely lead to many more parents taking part in conferences.

In the longer-term, **the city should take action to better empower and strengthen LSCs**. LSCs currently operate on a school-by-school basis and miss key opportunities to coordinate efforts at the community level and make decisions for the health of the neighborhood as a whole, some LSCs have full powers while others do not, and seats are vacant in many communities because people at a single school site lack the knowledge or interest to engage. Through working with key stakeholders, a better path ahead can and should be determined.

Key actions:

1. Work with key stakeholders to determine the appropriate size and scope of responsibilities of LSCs, and advocate for and create aligned laws and operations.
2. Review and evaluate specific legal/statutory changes needed based on 1988 School Reform Act.
3. Create rules within the new structure that ensure the LSCs are not ruled by special interests such as, making sure that people seeking to do business with the city, independent contractors, etc. are not allowed to participate.

I respectfully submit these recommendations for consideration understanding that changes to the LSC structure and to teacher retirement and compensation could present considerable challenges since they may require changes to law. That said, I am confident that a city leader with Mayor-elect Lightfoot's legal expertise and political courage is the ideal leader to enact important and needed reforms. I appreciate her sophisticated understanding of law and her commitment to making changes through a fair and transparent process.

Many thanks for your consideration,
Acasia Wilson Feinberg

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot
FROM: AJ Watson, National BAM Director – Youth Guidance

OBJECTIVE: Ensure all students have access to the quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success.

INITIATIVE: Ensure that every neighborhood school in under-resourced communities provides young women and men access to an evidence-based counseling & mentoring model, such as Becoming a Man (BAM) and Working on Womanhood (WOW) to provide social emotional learning supports.

How deepening investments in social and emotional learning would advance the following values:

EQUITY | Disenfranchised youth of color will benefit from high quality counseling and mentoring that fosters school engagement and improves educational outcomes.

TRANSPARENCY | Principal engagement in the allocation of BAM & WOW services to schools.

ACCOUNTABILITY | Impact report on BAM & WOW student academic and social emotional outcomes.

DIVERSITY | School-based programs are culturally responsive, built on a model of youth empowerment. More than 90% of Youth Guidance BAM/WOW counselors reflect the communities they serve.

TRANSFORMATION | When youth receive mentoring, cognitive-behavioral therapy within a trusted group, youth are empowered to answer for themselves the central question of adolescence: ‘Who am I becoming?’ and the potential of youth is unleashed, to the benefit of entire communities.

WHAT IS HAPPENING TODAY THAT WE NEED TO KEEP?

Partnerships with community-based organizations are critical to CPS’ ability to support the non-academic needs of youth. There are several key ways in which nonprofit partners support academic success, both during and after school. These include social-emotional learning and counseling supports; community schools & afterschool programming; workforce development and postsecondary enrollment & persistence.

As an anchor partner to Chicago Public Schools since 1969, Youth Guidance delivers counseling and prevention, community schools and youth workforce development programs across 113 neighborhood schools. CBO’s like Youth Guidance are critical, providing culturally-responsive, trauma-informed and evidence-based supports that help students develop the necessary social emotional skills to succeed in school and life.

Research shows that adolescence is not too late – and often is just the right time – for school-based mentoring and cognitive behavioral therapy programming to transform a young person’s vision of who they are – and who they can become. Becoming A Man (BAM) and Working On Womanhood (WOW) are anchor school-based counseling & mentoring programs that develop the social-emotional skills of CPS students in grades 7-12. BAM and WOW participants have access to weekly group counseling sessions that guide them in learning, internalizing and practicing social-emotional skills, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making. Participants also have access to their school-based BAM and WOW Counselors throughout the school day, receiving individual counseling to address personal challenges impacting their ability to focus and succeed in school.

Researchers at the University of Chicago Crime Lab found that BAM participants were 50% less likely to be arrested for violent crime, 25% more engaged in school and 19% more likely to graduate high-school on time. The current WOW research study, at the University of Chicago Crime Lab, will be releasing RCT findings in late Summer 2019. Pre and post assessments conducted by Youth Guidance show that over 50% of WOW participants experience improvements in PTSD, depression and anxiety symptoms.

The BAM and WOW counseling programs deliver a strong return on investment. By meeting youth where they are, BAM and WOW bring youth voice to the center-stage, empowering youth to understand their narrative and own their future direction – alongside the consistent support of a caring, well-trained mentor. Currently, BAM reaches 6,829 young men, in 113 schools; with WOW serving 2,277 young women in 36 Chicago schools.

There is significant opportunity to align social emotional learning supports with Community Schools programming. Full-service community school models provide high-quality developmental and enrichment opportunities for students and families both *during and beyond* the regular school-day, making the school a better resource for the community. Community school models coordinate access to new or existing resources that support student success, utilizing the school as a hub for community learning and activities. A school-based resource coordinator develops high-quality in-school and out-of-school programming that's aligned with academic standards and student needs. Youth Guidance operates 17 community school models in Chicago and engages 2,300 students annually. Youth Guidance resource coordinators engage with in-school programs such as BAM and WOW, while also providing students with at least 12 hours of out-of-school programming each week. Programs include direct academic supports (tutoring, STEM enrichment, college readiness), recreational (athletics, arts), social services (counseling, crisis intervention) and parent & family engagement. Among students who participated in Youth Guidance community school programming last year, 98% were promoted to the next grade and 67% of students who'd been suspended during the prior year received fewer (or no) suspensions. 98% of parents report that Youth Guidance community school programs improved their child's behavior and performance in school.

WHAT DOES THE ADMINISTRATION NEED TO IMPLEMENT IN THE NEXT 100 DAYS? A scan of social emotional learning across the city, and review of existing service levels and waitlists for BAM and WOW would inform recommendations for service levels for the 2019-20 school year. Connecting these supports to help students prepare for and navigate the transition to postsecondary college and career pathways is a critical priority. Youth Guidance is partnering with Thrive and the Obama Foundation on My Brother's Keeper, with a focus on launching a pilot within the next 100 days to further partner with CPS to support young men of color to fully reach their potential and to learn, plan and succeed. Leveraging CPS' focus on Postsecondary Leadership Teams, Youth Guidance and Thrive Chicago are partnering with local higher education and workforce organizations from across the city to create a stronger, youth focused, data driven, coordinated network of supports to improve postsecondary outcomes. The administration's engagement and leadership on the My Brother's Keeper Action Plan, which will be released on May 10 at Thrive Chicago's Opportunity Youth Summit, would further advance these aims.

WHAT CAN WE PLAN FOR THE LONGER-TERM IMPLEMENTATION?

Principals across Chicago have requested BAM and WOW programming and Youth Guidance maintains a waitlist of schools that are not being served due to lack of resources. We envision each neighborhood school will have the opportunity to receive culturally relevant, trauma-informed group and individual supports such as BAM & WOW. We strive for these social emotional learning and counseling supports to be expanded and integrated within Community Schools models to have a transformative effect on overall school climate.

WHAT CHALLENGES MIGHT THE ADMINISTRATION ENCOUNTER?

As the mentoring Initiative concludes its initial 3-years, over \$1.75M in philanthropic commitments are sunsetting, creating significant need for increased public investment to maintain current service levels for our youth. Without sustainable funding from the public sector, the loss of programs like BAM and WOW will cause ripple effects within CPS school communities where BAM and WOW counselors have become woven into the culture of the school as essential supports. With a loss of funding, fewer boys and young men of color will receive mentoring, while young women will continue to be under-served.



Memorandum

To: Lori E. Lightfoot, Mayor-Elect
City of Chicago

From: Clarisol Duque, Secretary, Board of Trustees, City Colleges of Chicago
Education Transition Committee

Date: April 18, 2019

Re: Increase postsecondary success to all who want to can live in and thrive in Chicago.

For more than 100 years, the City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) have been a resource to those who wish to better themselves personally and to prepare for new or increased opportunities in the job market. We stand ready to redouble our efforts under your leadership. The following are some initial areas where your attention and leadership could immediately reflect in measurable results for the citizens of the City of Chicago.

The City Colleges of Chicago is the largest higher education institution in the City of Chicago serving 80,000 students. The City Colleges is a system of seven independently accredited, comprehensive community colleges that offer general education credits to transfer, basic and advanced certificates, adult education classes and continuing education. CCC provides access to economic opportunities through an affordable, quality and relevant education with strong partnerships with employers, universities and community.

The City Colleges of Chicago's strategies for inclusive economic opportunities for Chicagoans include enhancing the Centers of Excellence model, increasing work-based learning opportunities, strengthening the CPS/CCC roadmap for college partnerships and funding Chicago's Star Scholarship.

CCC's seven community colleges each have a Center of Excellence which allows the colleges to provide high quality program offerings in each area of distinction. The areas of excellence represent strategic growth industries that increase career opportunities for our students through the partnership and investment from local employers and industry leaders.

- Daley College: Manufacturing, Technology & Engineering
- Olive-Harvey College: Transportation, Distribution & Logistics
- Harold Washington College: Business & Professional Services
- Wright College: Information Technology
- Kennedy-King College: Culinary Arts and Construction Technology
- Malcolm X College: Healthcare
- Truman College: Education, Human & Natural Sciences

CCC is strengthening this model by increasing work-based learning opportunities including internships, apprenticeships and job opportunities for students to obtain practical experience with industry partners while completing a degree. One recent example is the Apprenticeship 2020 program which seeks to accelerate the growth of apprenticeships in high-demand industries and occupations with the goal of hiring of 1,000 apprentices by 2020.

One of the most important partnerships for CCC is with Chicago Public Schools (CPS). Given the high matriculation of CPS graduates at CCC this is a critical relationship. One third of CPS graduates who immediately enrolled in high education institutions do so at a 2-year college and more than ¾ of CPS graduates who enroll in 2-year colleges do so at CCC. The CPS/CCC joint strategic roadmap includes a robust menu of programs that creates a seamless transition for CPS high school students into CCC, these include dual enrollment/dual credit programs where high school students earn college credit at no cost, access to postsecondary navigators that work with CPS high school students to complete postsecondary plans as well as the Star Scholarship.

The Star Scholarship provides a last-dollar scholarship for students earning at least a B-average and test nearly college ready. To date, more than 6,000 students have been named Star Scholars including students who are Dreamers with 25 colleges participating as Star transfer partners. Recent accomplishments with university partners include guaranteed admissions agreements with University of Illinois system as well as a DePaul University-Harold Washington Academy which will allow Start Scholars to take CCC classes on DePaul's campus.

Over the last five years the success of these initiatives has been threatened by revenue challenges. The significant and steady decline in state investment as well as the decrease in tuition revenue due to diminished enrollment have made it difficult to make true transformational change. The challenge in the short and long term will be the need for increased state investment in community colleges, assistance in securing a diverse revenue source to sustain the Star Scholarship and other early college initiatives and a greater investment from the business and civic community.

The Mayor's office can have a direct and impactful role working with State government to support investment in higher education, including much needed capital funding. In addition, the Mayor's engagement with the business community must include efforts to hire more CCC graduates, support work-based opportunities and the co-location job training initiatives within CCC.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot
FROM: Clarisol Duque, Chicago Director, Office of U.S. Senator Durbin
Education Transition Committee Member
DATE: April 17, 2019

Re: Reduce gun violence and improve health in the most socially vulnerable communities of Chicago.

The Chicago HEAL Hospital Action, Engagement, and Leadership (HEAL) Initiative is a hospital-led collaborative with a public commitment to reduce violence and improve health on Chicago's West and South sides. These communities have been unable to fully thrive in Chicago as a result of violence and health disparities that are at the root of broader educational and economic challenges. The anchor institution model of hospital-led engagement harnesses economic power to create more equity, diversity and inclusion and transformation within disinvested areas.

In 2018, U.S. Senator Durbin convened meetings of the executive leadership of the major hospitals serving Chicago to discuss the need for a focused response to the increased violence in Chicago. Under the Chicago HEAL Initiative, 10 of Chicago's largest hospitals are building upon their world-class health delivery and research activities to recognize their roles as the leading economic engines in their communities. Together, they have made 16 tangible, public commitments (outside of their traditional health roles) to uplift their communities through: economic investment; community programming; and in-hospital practices.

The 10 hospitals initially involved in the Chicago HEAL Initiative are among the largest serving Chicago: Advocate Christ Medical Center, AMITA Health's Saints Mary and Elizabeth Medical Center, Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, Cook County Health and Hospital System, Loyola University Medical Center, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Rush University Medical Center, Sinai Health System, University of Chicago Medical Center and University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences Systems.

Chicago HEAL is focusing on 18 Chicago neighborhoods most plagued by violence, inequality, and poverty. These neighborhoods have the highest murder rates in the City and also have the highest rates of poverty and unemployment, and the lowest high school graduation rates.

As part of Chicago HEAL, each hospital commits to individually achieve—or partner together and with other stakeholders to collectively address—the following priority targets and best practices over three years:

Increase Local Workforce Commitment to Reduce Economic Hardship

- Target a 15 percent increase in hiring out of the 18 target communities
- Target a 20 percent increase in purchasing relevant supplies/services from local suppliers
- Develop career advancement and growth opportunities to foster local workforce retention
- Create additional youth summer employment, workforce development, and apprenticeships programs (including through existing corporate networks and City

Colleges) to promote careers in health care fields and paraprofessional roles (e.g., case workers, community health workers) to students in target neighborhoods

Support Community Partnerships to Improve Health and Safety of Public Environments

- Deliver trauma-informed, community-based counseling and peer support services across all target neighborhoods, including through home visiting programs, case management, youth mentorship programs, and violence interruption programming
- Promote co-location of behavioral health services, including by partnering with federally qualified health centers and schools to open new clinics in target neighborhoods
- Improve physical neighborhood vitality by supporting affordable housing pilot programs for the homeless, housing renovations, restoration of vacant lots, and community garden development
- Establish Safe Haven, Safe Passage routes, and gun-free zones surrounding hospital-owned buildings and facilities
- Hold community health fairs and other summer and night-time events at City parks and community centers to increase access to wraparound services and reduce violence

Prioritize Key In-Hospital Clinical Practices to Address Unmet Needs

- Train all hospital intake staff and primary care practitioners in behavioral health and trauma screenings, and communicating with patients on firearm safety
- Establish trauma-informed post-injury counseling and community case management programs to support long-term healing for all appropriate victims of violence
- Reduce opioid prescribing rates by 20 percent to help prevent drug misuse and addiction
- Increase lead poisoning screening rates for Medicaid/CHIP-eligible children by 15 percent—to mitigate neurological and developmental harms
- Develop common data sharing infrastructure and platforms across hospitals and with relevant stakeholders to coordinate services, identify trends, and improve patient care, including exploration of models with City databases and agencies
- Participate in the Chicago Gun Violence Research Collaborative to expand violence prevention research network and agenda to additional sites with at least 5 new projects citywide
- Participate in the Illinois Perinatal Quality Collaborative and provide implicit bias and cultural competency training to providers—to help reduce racial disparities in health outcomes and strengthen families

The Mayoral Office of Violence Prevention can play an important role as the central convener of City efforts working with CPS, CCC, CPD, and the Chicago Department of Public Health to partner with the various hospital-led investments and programs. For example, leveraging the efforts of World Business Chicago to build the capacity of and facilitate linkages between local businesses, contractors, and service providers and the 10 Chicago HEAL hospitals. Another example would be working through CPS to identify opportunities for partnerships with hospitals to expand delivery of after-school/community-based programs (e.g. BAM, Choose to Change) and school-based health clinics.

As with any large, multi-sector collaboration, challenges may include coordinating activities across participating entities and neighborhoods, sharing data and information across stakeholders, and incorporating the community voice and perspective into activities.

Memo

Name: Courtney D. B. Everette

Transition Committee: **Education**

Prompt: Objective 2 – Ensure all students have access to the quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success.

My thoughts as follows reflect my experiences as a former student of CPS, a parent of two current CPS students, a person who has attended elementary, middle and high school in districts throughout the Midwest, and a mental health professional with 20 years of engagement with families and children, most often those with developmental disabilities and other special needs.

- **A potential initiative:** Discontinuation of the selective enrollment program and investing in expansion of the community schools model to build strong neighborhood school across the city that are able to cater to a variety of learners, from diverse learners to gifted learners, while focusing mental health and other support services to the needs of each unique school community.
- How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative
 - **Equity** – Although the selective enrollment testing and application process has been structured to create a ‘level’ playing field to provide students access to high quality advanced instruction, it has instead produced a culture of ‘gaming the system’ with false addresses and training preschools being utilized to gain access to coveted programs. Students from the lowest social-economic status (SES) ‘tier’ do not apply at the same rate as those from higher SES tiers, further indicating that their trajectory through CPS programming remains impacted by the complex interplay of race and class. An equitable process in providing access to accelerated learning would ensure all CPS students are able to be appraised for access to this learning structure, not only those whose parents have greater access and knowledge of the system. When students are recommended for accelerated learning from within their school environment, and encouraged and supported by that school to engage in more challenging opportunities, families are given a voice and support in overcoming obstacles that may impede their progress.
 - **Transparency** – At this time, my two children are students in a Regional Gifted Center (RGC) program, and despite my ability to navigate the selective enrollment process to successfully enroll my children in the same school in the same accelerated program, I maintain a weak understanding of how and why CPS restricts its access to these programs to so few students. I regularly meet parents who have children who obtained strong scores on the selective enrollment tests, but did not receive offers to applied to programs. The known algorithm that factors test scores, rankings and tiers for elementary school students appears logical on paper; however, many parents feel that discretion and favoritism are unaccounted factors that influence the process. By eliminating this process, and focusing resources on strengthening academics in neighborhood schools, a fully transparent understanding of why each student receives the differentiated instruction they are given can be made by each school’s staff.
 - **Accountability** – Because the selective enrollment process is cloaked in a significant level of rumor and confusion, parents are left to wonder after putting themselves through this process, if the outcomes are worth the effort. CPS should readily provide parents with information regarding the resources allocated, academic outcomes, and how this data is being used to improve the existing programs. By moving the differentiated learning into the local school environment, existing means of tracking and reporting utilized by principals, LSCs and other within school groups can be used to capture real-time changes with programming in the school, and allow for within school and within district comparisons to guide future planning.
 - **Diversity & Inclusion** – Racial and economic diversity is often held as the standard for an ‘inclusive’ educational setting. This goal neglects the impact on learners of exposure to and interaction with diverse

learners and academically high achieving students. Even if a robust commitment to diversity is achieved, the commitment to giving students and families from diverse perspectives a representative voice often lags behind achieving statistical diversity. The placement of selective enrollment programs in schools throughout the city was likely intended to support diversification of the student population; however, the voices of the often well-resourced, often white families has led to centering voices that do not reflect the school community at large at many of the selective enrollment school sites. Shifting to a community based school model will allow for the natural diversity of a school environment to be celebrated, and greater ability to provide opportunities for all families to be represented and have their voices guide the climate of their school.

- **Transformation** – This shift would not be without controversy, nevertheless, as the new administration of our city looks to take on radical transformation to create an educational environment worthy of our world-class city, big thoughts and big actions will be needed. The existing system is providing an exclusive learning opportunity to a fraction of the CPS population. In seeking to transform educational opportunities for students and stem the tide of families moving away from the city to seek more consistent and high quality learning opportunities, we must look to shake up a system that serves so few. Families invest in what matters, and seek to have the agencies they interact with do the same. Local, community focused schools allow families to collaborate with their neighbors to increase engagement and positive outcomes that are meaningful to the residents of that community.
- And as it pertains to this initiative:
 - **What is happening today that we need to keep** – Mayor Elect Lightfoot has already committed to further exploring and expanding the community school model. This undertaking should continue, with an eye for how this model can be applied across Chicago varied and diverse neighborhoods to meet the demands specific to those areas.
 - **What we need to implement in the next 100 days** – In addition to continued research on the community schools model, parents should be presented with the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the current school model, including the following questions:
 - What do you know about the CPS selective enrollment schools, application process, and outcomes?
 - What do you know about the concept of a 'community school'?
 - If your child does NOT attend your CPS assigned neighborhood school, what factors influenced this decision?
 - In what ways could your school environment do more to connect you to your community?
 - What would you as a parent/guardian consider a 'good outcome' for your student? Please include any aspects of social, academic or career outcomes that align with the values of your family.
 - What support services would benefit your family? Would you be open to engaging with those services in your school building/on your school campus?
 - **What we can plan for longer-term implementation** – CPS currently contains schools that offer educational opportunities for diverse and gifted learners. Additional research into how these schools manage diversification of academic content, continued teacher training, concerns related to social emotional need of students in each group and how these students are integrated into a whole, cohesive student body is warranted.
 - **What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative** – Change is challenging, and for those benefiting most from a system set up to most greatly reward those with the greatest access to resources, the voices of essential may be loud and come with significant power behind them. However, we must remain focused on the families who have historically been omitted from giving voice to what their educational hopes and desires for their families are. A school system that educates all children of our city in ways that fortify them academically, socially, and emotionally benefits all residents, and this aim should remain within focus when the noise from those opposed grows to great. This type of radical change will also require time and patience, specifically from those who will gain more access to resources in the transition. Transparency and accountability can ensure that families continue to be assured of the Mayor-Elect's commitment to providing true equity in our public school.

Transition Memo to Lightfoot Team

Name: Cornelia Grumman, Education Director, Robert R. McCormick Foundation

Transition Committee: Education

Prompt: Ensure all young children have access to the quality early childhood experiences needed to enter Kindergarten ready to thrive.

Initiative: Measurably improve citywide Kindergarten readiness by developing a robust professional learning infrastructure to support more consistent quality and effectiveness among the city's early childhood workforce.

Currently

- Even with a growing amount of data collected on early childhood quality and now on school readiness, no infrastructure exists to synthesize, analyze, disseminate and support providers and schools to use just-in-time data to motivate and support improvement, or to ensure equitable allocation of resources.
- Few models exist within early learning of best practice, continuous improvement, job embedded, professional development. Negligible support is available for those that do provide it. Some promising models exist on which to build and emulate, however, such as that at Carole Robertson Center, Lead Learn Excel, National Louis' "Taking Charge of Change" program and the YMCA's "YELQI" quality initiative.
- Limited city and state resources exist to support quality early childhood professional learning, including coaching supports. Resources that do exist are distributed without much accountability.

What is happening today that we need to keep:

- New cost modeling and reimbursement rates are essential and overdue.
- Completion of move to universal pre-K to all 4-year-olds, and fundamental restructuring to adequately fund 0-3 year-olds in community-based settings.
- Continuation of current efforts to analyze how best to integrate and improve quality in the city's early childhood data systems, which will be foundational to driving school improvement.

In the first 100 days:

- Conduct a citywide professional learning survey of current resources, resource quality and options for teachers and leaders and how they are deployed, particularly applying an equity lens.
 - o Develop a well-designed and accessible online compendium for the field of those options, when they are offered, and which professionals they're designed to support (similar to Ingenuity's for arts education).
- Develop and support a city early learning professional development advisory group to:

- Outline a citywide professional development strategy for early childhood.
- Generate a list of quality indicators.
- Create a program quality dashboard.
- Identify quality models of early childhood professional learning to showcase.
- Generate letters to every elementary school principal that lists all early childhood feeder programs within a mile radius of their school. Include contact information, encourage principals to reach out and provide incentives, provide “conversation starter” questions to begin to align programs and include recommendations from Kindergarten Transition Advisory Council to seed ideas for engagement.
- Generate letters to community-based preschool programs and list all Kindergarten school programs and contact info within a mile radius. Include contact information; incentivize engagement with schools; provide “conversation starter” questions to better align programs; and include recommendations from Kindergarten Transition Advisory Council report.
- All can be done in a public-private partnership, leveraging private money and resources to fully focus and maximize the impact of public expenditures.

For longer-term implementation:

- Develop city infrastructure, like that created in CPS to promote systemic usage of freshmen on track data, to strengthen the city’s culture of continuous improvement and corresponding accountability among school- and community-based early childhood programs, and to actively provide the right data to the right people at the right time to motivate improvement, as well as professional learning supports.
- Publish a State of Chicago Early Childhood report biannually, incorporating various indicators of quality, disaggregated by neighborhood/school/program where possible.
- Create professional learning communities and innovators networks across city to smooth the transition for children between preschool and Kindergarten, and to level expectations for readiness.
- Develop Summit series on different topics to more widely share best practices and improve early childhood quality.

Challenges:

Foundational to the success of this potential initiative is completion of a few citywide major initiatives currently underway, including UPK, reimbursement reform and improved data systems. Other challenges include: shifting mindset of the field from compliance to continuous improvement mentality; improved quality and usage of data; workforce quality and pipeline and stability.



Name: Constance Jones, CEO Noble Network of Charter Schools

Transition Committee: Education Committee

Initiative: Increase postsecondary success so all who want to can live in and thrive in Chicago by adopting and scaling best practices from Noble schools.

Background

The Noble Network of Charter Schools educates 10 percent of Chicago Public Schools high school students, with more than 12,000 students at our 18 schools. We are part of the broader charter community in Chicago, which together educates 57,000 public school students in our city. Noble is a non-selective, non-profit charter public school founded by educators in 1999 under the umbrella of CPS. Under an open-enrollment system, we currently serve students from every neighborhood in the City of Chicago, and each year 99 percent of our seniors are accepted into college before they graduate high school. Our students [attend and graduate from college at 2-3x the rate of similar peer groups in Chicago](#).

Our students face the same challenges of diverse learning needs, poverty, and racism as every student in Chicago. This is why we are incredibly proud of Noble students' lower dropout rates, higher SAT growth and performance, higher high school graduation rates, higher college enrollment rates, and higher college completion rates than the city as a whole. In partnership with families, our teachers and staff work very hard to make Noble the best place to attend school in our city. We are proud contributors to the academic progress CPS has made in recent years and look forward to serving Chicago families for years to come.

Post-secondary performance to maintain and scale

Noble's commitment to our students' college success does not begin or end with high school graduation. We set the stage for success after high school on the first day of orientation and continue support to our alumni long after graduation. As a result, **our students are graduating from college at rates [2-3x at the rate of their peers from similar backgrounds in Chicago](#)**. Below is a sample of the policies and programs Noble uses to support our students, 83 percent of whom are first generation college students. These policies and programs should be maintained and scaled across the public school system, so that every CPS student has the same opportunity as those at Noble schools:

Establish a high-quality college-focused academic curriculum, where every student understands that college can be a reality for them.

- A relentless focus on high-quality classroom instruction and a supportive school environment empowers students to grow more on the required tests for college admissions. Noble schools also fared well when looking at the SAT, which is key for college admissions. When compared with all Chicago public high schools (including those with selective admission requirements) [Noble's open enrollment public schools earned all 12 of the top spots for SAT growth](#).
- This provides students access to colleges with higher graduation rates and better financial aid.



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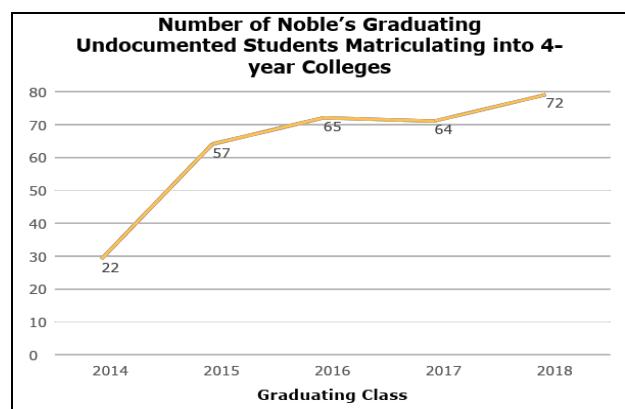
- Each student participates in a 4-year advisory program dedicated to early college exposure and soft-skills to prepare students for life after high school.
- Students at Noble are exposed to early college or career credentials - we offer ROTC, dual enrollment with City Colleges, IB programs and [AP courses](#). Our students pass these rigorous exams at levels above their peers locally and nationally.
- Over 900 students every year participate in the [Summer of a Lifetime](#) program, which sends sophomore students to college programs across the country to gain early exposure to university-level coursework and living situations.

Maintain and grow a dedicated college team which uses a comprehensive and data-driven approach to empower students to find the best fit colleges and universities.

- Noble uses our flexibility as a charter school to hire a college counselor for every 50 seniors, and a collegiate seminar class that meets for the duration of senior year to [progress through the college process](#). In that class and in cooperation with each student's family, all students complete the FAFSA, workshop application essays, apply to an average of 10 colleges, and then apply to relevant scholarships.
- Those college counselors use predictive technology ([the "College Bot"](#)) created by Noble, which uses historical data from our alumni as well as institutional graduation rates to help families find the schools that are most likely to result in college graduation and are affordable.

Continue to support graduates after they leave high school, with counselors and programs designed to guide and assist first-generation college students.

- After graduation, each school has a dedicated [alumni counselor](#) who provides individualized support and comprehensively tracks alumni so we can accurately measure persistence and improve our support model.
- Noble is an [active partner with university student support offices](#) to onboard Noble graduates into college life and improve college persistence.
- [Pritzker Access Scholarship](#) - Since 2015, with the support of the Pritzker Traubert and Pritzker Family Foundations, Noble has been able to provide scholarships to our undocumented graduates, resulting in 79 percent of these graduates matriculating to 4-year colleges. With this access and the continued support we have provided, students are persisting at unprecedented rates, with 70 percent of the founding class expected to earn bachelor's degrees within 5 years of graduation. Comparatively, Noble graduate data shows an increase from 41 percent to 76 percent from 2016 college grads to 2018 college grads.
- [Alumni Career Office](#) - In 2016 Noble added a career office to help older alumni who are looking for jobs with resume editing, interview prep, salary negotiation and placement. To date that office has increased after-graduation employment for bachelor's graduates by 35 percent in just the first two years of existence.





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- Noble Forward - Due to finances or other life circumstances some students still end up stopping-out of college. To make sure our alumni can get back on track, Noble launched a groundbreaking program in 2019 so that alumni can get their bachelor's degree online through Southern New Hampshire University while receiving intensive coaching support, all for a cost below Pell grant.

Noble's cohesive system of preparation for post-secondary success should be maintained and further scaled. All students should have access to this level of support. Pivotal to maintaining and continuing to improve these programs are consistent, predictable funding that is equitable for students regardless of the type of school they attend. Increases in funding would result in better depth and breadth of these programs. As it stands, specifically for alumni support work, Noble needs to independently fundraise dollars.

Short term implementation needs

To build on the work and outcomes described above, schools need:

- Clarity, consistency and equity in funding that is based on student population and need. Schools with higher levels of poverty, english language learners, special education students, or nearby violence or crime should receive more resources to best meet the needs of their students.
- Increased funding for schools to support students post-graduation so that philanthropy doesn't dictate levels of support or service.
- Additional flexibility to staff in ways which support student success. Charter schools have flexibility to dedicate staff to college and alumni-related functions. For non-charter schools to adapt a similar model they would need additional administrative and contractual freedom to staff in these ways.

Long-term implementation

Bridge the divide between different types of schools in Chicago by eliminating attendance boundaries and increasing transparency and accountability for college acceptance and persistence

- Great ideas are sector agnostic. Neighborhood schools, charter, magnet, military, IB schools - all have something to contribute to make our city and Chicago Public Schools better.
- To make sure the best ideas from all schools benefit more students, we need to remove distinctions and barriers that preference one school type over another and choose to elevate best practices regardless of where they originate.
- In that spirit of equity, GoCPS high school admissions should not automatically preference one type of school but rather the best performing schools as measured by SQRP. Attendance boundaries continue to act as gatekeepers at certain schools and segregate school populations. CPS should remove attendance boundaries so students can attend the schools of their choice and not be constrained by where their family can afford housing.



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- Transparency and accountability - the district should track, publish and hold schools accountable for delivering on promises of college persistence and success.

Create conditions and dedicated funding for best practice sharing

- Noble schools already share resources, knowledge and best practices. In fact a number of CPS schools use the formative interim assessment system that our teachers and staff have developed.
- We have an open door policy and frequently provide tours to educators from around Chicago, the country, and the world. [Technology developed at Noble](#) to help students matriculate to and persist in college has been shared for free with districts around the country, including New York City's Department of Education.
- All of this best-practice sharing is currently happening without commensurate funding or structures to facilitate.
- The district and city should create systems and funding streams to recognize high performing schools and programs and incentivize high performing schools (of all types) to share lessons to scale impact.

Create equity of access to resources and facilities

- Students who attend schools in Chicago - regardless of governance type - should have similar access to facilities and amenities (sports fields, science labs, swimming pools, etc).
- Noble has never been invited to be part of the capital planning process and we don't receive the same funding or resources as compared to other CPS schools.
- The result in this capital disparity is that students are attending schools without gym space or adequate labs, sports teams practice in the hallways or in parking lots - this is unfair, different from all other types of public schools, and is an inequity that is solvable.

There is so much to be proud of in Chicago. Chicago Public Schools are leading the way on graduation rates, college matriculation and persistence. We should focus on that progress and reject a toxic narrative that pits one type of school against another. Schools of all types contribute to this great story of progress in Chicago - magnet, selective, district neighborhood, military, and charter. Noble is a significant part of that story and we're proud to play our role serving Chicago's families. We look forward to continuing our nation-leading performance and scaling those lessons for impact across our city.

Constance Jones
Chief Executive Officer
Noble Network of Charter Schools



Name: Daniel Anello, Kids First Chicago, danello@kidsfirstchicago.org | (312) 853-9162

Transition Committee: Education Committee

Prompt: Ensure all students in CPS have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed

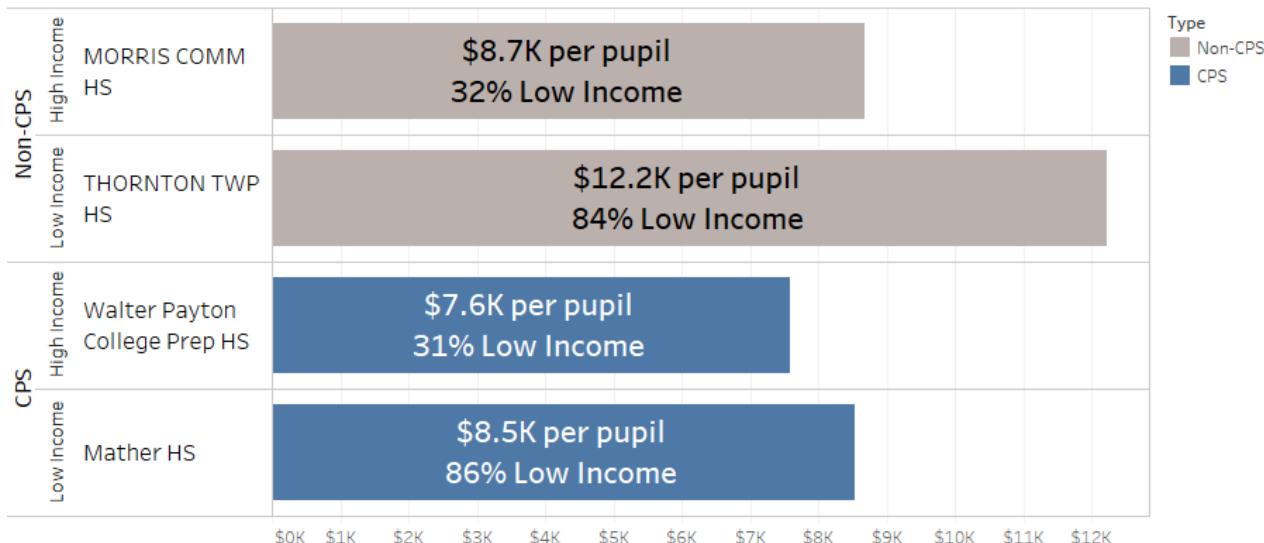
Proposal Initiative: Design an “equity index” for CPS that provides a roadmap for how the district can optimize Student Based Budgeting (SBB) to ensure our most at-risk students receive adequate support.

Despite real progress to improve student outcomes in Chicago—certainly worth celebrating and building upon—our public education system remains deeply inequitable: more than 40,000 low-income students of color attend chronically low-performing schools in communities that have been historically underserved.¹ With African American and Hispanic children and diverse learners more likely to be enrolled in low-performing schools, our city perpetuates a cycle of poverty and racism that is unfair at best and devastating to life outcomes at worst.

We have engaged with more than 10,000 families since 2016 and consistently hear demands for fair funding. Last week, in one of our focus groups with 50+ West Side parents, a mother cited how inequitable funding means her school has a nurse for only 30 minutes per week. Even with 400+ students, her children’s school has neither the specialized programming that brings additional dollars and personnel from the district, nor the wealth and networks that enable more affluent schools to bolster services and programs. What they do have is a population of students that deserve true equity, where they are provided enough resources to meet them where they are and set the foundation for their success.

Without equity-based **funding reforms**, Chicago’s opportunity gap will only continue to widen. Today in CPS, dollars do follow students, but those dollars are not distributed equitably, based on differentiated need. This means that low-income students from the West Side Region receive roughly the same per-pupil dollars as their more affluent peers from Greater Lincoln Park, when we know their needs are dramatically different.²

Moreover, the current distribution CPS uses for student-based funding is incongruent with Illinois’s new evidence-based funding formula, which calculates its distribution to districts based on more than 20 student attributes such as low-income, English language learners, and special education designations. State law does not stipulate how individual districts then disperse funding. At the state level, we now see a meaningful increase in distribution of per-pupil funding to high-need districts; this is not the case in CPS. Following the example set by the state, Chicago must ensure equity, moving beyond equality, by directing more dollars toward higher-need schools.



¹ As we outlined in our 2017 [Quality Seats Report](#), 1 in 4 African American students is enrolled in a school with a “failing seat,” compared to 1 in 13 Hispanic students, and just 1 in 50 white students. Four communities – Austin, Englewood, Near West Side, and West Englewood – have 25% of all of Chicago’s failing schools.

² In the West Side Region, 88% of students qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL), compared to just 28% in Greater Lincoln Park.

WHAT IS HAPPENING TODAY THAT WE NEED TO KEEP

CPS should maintain its commitment to **ensure money follows students** no matter where they choose to go to school and continue to **provide school leaders with the autonomy and flexibility to manage their school budgets** to meet their students' specific, personalized needs.

WHAT WE NEED TO IMPLEMENT IN THE NEXT 100 DAYS

Today, only about 15% of a Chicago public school's budget is driven by student need. The other 85% is distributed in a number of opaque, idiosyncratic manners that we suspect do not always put kids first. Three actions to take immediately:

- 1) **Undertake an equity analysis** of CPS's comprehensive FY19 budget—not just looking at general education spending, but also understanding the impact of special funding categories, such as the small schools fund, grant allocations, centrally allocated positions, hold harmless dollars, and—more critically—new dollars flowing into the district from the state as a result of SB1947. The objective is to identify where students are getting more or fewer resources and supports district-wide.
- 2) **Convene a local education funding taskforce** to outline a set of preliminary recommendations on equitable funding for further research.
- 3) **Lead the push for achieving adequate funding** from the State of Illinois. Mayor Lightfoot must continue to advocate for a “fair share” of state funding to fill the district’s adequacy gap. CPS is still not adequately funded per the [new State law](#) at roughly 63% of what students need.³

WHAT WE CAN PLAN FOR LONGER-TERM IMPLEMENTATION

Armed with greater transparency into how CPS funds its schools and students today, we will be in a position to explore more nuanced ways to fund students with the greatest need.

- 1) In partnership with the CPS Budget Office and taskforce, **create an “equity index”** that is contextualized for Chicago. To gain a deeper understanding of the stratification of poverty within our schools and communities, CPS should look for more robust ways to measure the depth of the socioeconomic gap apart from the binary Free and Reduced-price Lunch and Title I designations. Census tract data can provide additional insights into household factors (e.g. household median income, single-parent households, educational attainment of adults, and homeownership) that may impact student achievement.⁴ We should also incorporate what we know about the impacts of trauma and violence into a Chicago-specific “equity index”.
- 2) **Apply the equity index for any new dollars** flowing into CPS from the State of Illinois. An equity index could be applied to the following: (a) identification of and learning from schools that are serving students well with socioeconomic factors that often correlate with lower outcomes; (b) redeployment of resources to trauma-informed instruction, counseling and social-emotional supports, transportation, after-school programming, tutoring services and more.

WHAT CHALLENGES WE MIGHT ENCOUNTER IN EXECUTING ON THIS INITIATIVE

With declining birth rates, slowed immigration, and families leaving Chicago, CPS's steeply declining student population will remain a major challenge for the Lightfoot Administration that extends beyond education.

Challenges to introducing a more nuanced student based budgeting formula that are specific to education include:

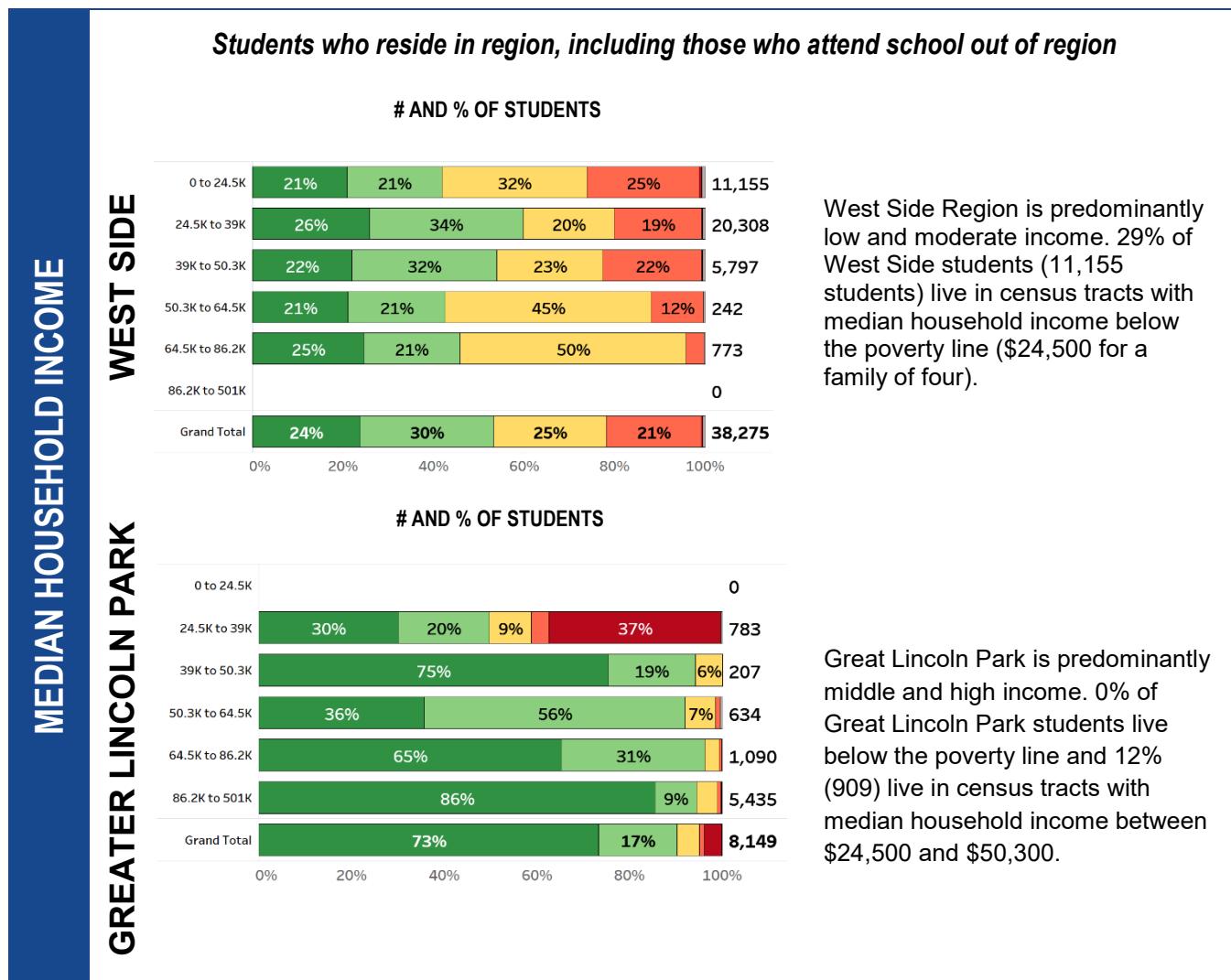
- How to manage schools that would not see increased funding. While public schools serving more affluent students would be held harmless, they would not likely see increased funding under this new model. This issue is further complicated by the fact that Chicago still falls short of adequacy as defined by the state.
- The implementation of a new equity index would likely bring more dollars to Chicago's under-enrolled schools in the near-term (e.g. school enrollment under 350 students and utilization below 50%), but this will not resolve the fiscal challenges for the subset of these schools that are the most severely under-enrolled (e.g. school enrollment under 100 students).

We believe that this initiative is fundamental to Chicago delivering upon its promise to provide all kids, regardless of zip code, with a high-quality education. Kids First Chicago stands ready to advance this critical initiative and welcomes questions and comments.

³ Per the State of Illinois's adequacy target percentages upon the passing of SB1947 in 2017

⁴ When Kids First Chicago mapped data from the Annual Regional Analysis to Census Tract data for household income, we found that 29% of West Side students live in census tracts with median household income below the poverty line (\$24,500 for a family of four), compared to 0% of students in Lincoln Park. See [page following](#).

HOW MANY STUDENTS ARE ENROLLED IN LEVEL 1+/1 SCHOOLS?



Memo To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

From: Dr. Dilara Sayeed

Date: April 16, 2019

Mayor-Elect Lightfoot's Education Objective #2:

Ensure all students in CPS have access to the schools, teachers, and supports they need to succeed

Mayor-Elect Lightfoot's vision for Chicago youth, focused on values of equity and transformation, can provide whole-child ***My Chicago*** support from birth to 18 years old. The initiative outlined in this memo invites us as a city to think big and play the long game. ***My Chicago*** is a comprehensive online portal that connects parents/guardians and learning experts with a) critical 360-degree information in one place, and b) landscape of resources provided to children through integrated city government departments; education, health, public safety, family services, and recreation.

Goal of *My Chicago*:

Ensure every child has a ***My Chicago*** whole-child strategy to become a successful Chicagoan¹ by

1. Providing parents/guardians and experts with digitally accessible and comprehensive information on each child
2. Supporting parents/guardians and experts in identifying and connecting each child to crucial individualized wrap-around supports

Our Equity Challenge - and Our Opportunity

Providing whole-child, wrap-around services in a large diverse system is a monumental order. No school system can do this on its own. A city-wide system is needed. Chicago has talent, programs, and valuable resources right here in our city. Community Schools² are expanding, and this is a start. But a wrap-around system means access to citywide systems and information³. This will require city leaders and residents who have the will to focus on equity and access for every Chicagoan, and who will collaborate across communities and sectors.

Current Context: Chicago students and families manage a vast and confusing volume of records regarding learning, school access, vaccination/ health, library, recreational, family services, and the justice system over the first 18 years of life. How do we manage all this information, and how can the data help us improve the lives of children?

Opportunity: Chicago has over 550,000 persons under 18 years old⁴, with about 360,000 students ages 5 to 18 at Chicago Public Schools. CPS' *Aspen* Student Information System goes live on April 22, 2019⁵. *Aspen* provides valuable information, yet for the most vulnerable children/students, this info is not enough to provide wrap-around services across education, healthcare, family, and social services. This is where the city can help integrate all systems of information through one portal and connect children to resources more intentionally.

Current Context: A significant percentage of Chicago students change schools within CPS during any given year, have out-of-school experiences that impact learning, or encounter other challenges. Even though school records exist, most after-school personnel, family services, healthcare or social service providers do not have critical information on previously successful interventions and supports, or recent issues outside of school that impact learning.

Opportunity: Individually, each of the following systems provide critical information that help a student succeed: school health records maintain basic information including vaccinations⁶; school grading systems maintain academic records; the Park District system keeps records of enrolled activities; Family Services records highlight housing, care and other circumstances; and library records show topics of interest as well as access to books and reading (key factor in school success). A comprehensive ***My Chicago*** system would allow a parent/guardian, educator or healthcare provider to access 360-degree information all on one portal to understand the whole child and then to access crucial wrap-around services.

As a teacher, I often investigated previous learning and health challenges of some of my most vulnerable students; those new to the neighborhood, victims of trauma, or ones dealing with mild to severe learning challenges. Previous teachers, social workers, or school nurses were often not accessible. All this meant precious learning time was lost before we were able to get enough information to provide precise learning interventions. As an education and non-profit administrator for the last decade, addressing equitable and efficient access to resources is my focus, and of many of my colleagues.

¹ <https://www.epi.org/publication/reducing-and-averting-achievement-gaps/>

² <https://cps.edu/Programs/DistrictInitiatives/Pages/CommunitySchoolsInitiative.aspx>

³ <https://www.nea.org/assets/docs/Wraparound-Services-05142013.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/chicagocityillinois>

⁵ <https://cps.edu/aspen/Pages/aspen.aspx>

⁶ <https://www.nasn.org/advocacy/professional-practice-documents/position-statements/ps-electronic-health-records>

Organize secure, coherent, comprehensive, and accessible data/information portal for each child/student



Utilize this information to develop projections and identify crucial services/resources through a whole-child lens



Empower parents/guardians and specialists to connect children with those resources

What's Working:

A plethora of supports for children and students exist in Chicago. There are interventions and resources in every area from early childhood speech pathology to elementary school literacy to childhood PTSD support to scholarships and postsecondary CTE programming. We have multiple databases that list them, and accountability systems that reveal levels of effectiveness. When a system understands a child/student and consistently connects them with the best programming from ages 0 to 18, they have a positive trajectory towards success. Unfortunately, this is not happening for every child.

First 100 Days of Mayor-Elect Lightfoot's Tenure:

Listen and Build Trust with Stakeholders: Parents/Guardians. Mayor-Elect Lightfoot and her strategy team members will engage with diverse groups of parents/guardians across the city. The objective is to learn what families believe is equity, access, transparency, and accountability for their children from the city's education, health, and social services.

Listen and Build Trust with Stakeholders: Experts - Educators, Health/Counseling professionals, Social Service Leaders. The Mayor-Elect and her team will learn what assistance city service providers need to serve our students and children better. They will also identify how to improve systems of information, access, transparency, and accountability.

Implementation- Draft:

Year One:

- Build strategy, team, timeline, and transparent systems
- Listen and build trust with stakeholders to develop strategy for the *My Chicago* portal
- Review existing models of portal systems in electronic medical records (EMR), post-secondary student records, etc., and develop plan to execute the *My Chicago* initiative
- Identify and organize landscape of city resources and interventional supports for Chicagoans ages 0 to 18

Year Two:

- Begin portal development utilizing existing CPS systems and integrating with Chicago Public Library data
- Integrate PreK-12 CPS student health, social worker and counseling records
- Develop learning diagnostic systems that connect children with crucial interventions and resources across the city
- System engagement, piloting, and training for all stakeholders

Year Three

- Broaden initiative to include ages 0 to PreK.
- Broaden initiative to include Departments of Children and Family Services, and other identified departments

Challenges:

Privacy Concerns. Research is clear; over the last 10 years, banking models and electronic medical records (EMR) have utilized strong cyber security and increased efficacy. Throughout the above process, we will be transparent and deepen trust. Parents/guardians will have unique user login, FERPA/HIPPA compliant security, an opt-out option for all or one part of the system (access to CPS learning records but not to CPL records, etc.), date/time stamp for every user and entry.

Collaborative Infrastructure Necessary. Communication and collaboration across departments is necessary for this transformational work. City Clerk Anna Valencia's team developed the City Key that allows residents to integrate city services such as CTA, Library, and identification all in one card⁷. Consider utilizing this as a starting point or model.

Electronic medical records (EMR) systems have collated and transformed healthcare diagnosis and care⁸.

Ownership at City Level. Failed past attempts in other regions put ownership of this initiative at the state level. With over 800 independent school districts and hundreds of municipalities, Illinois state ownership of all child data is not an option. Local control at the city level starting with our 360,000 Chicago Public Schools students is the strongest model.

My Chicago- individualized wrap-around support for success in school, career and life- for every Chicago child.

⁷ <http://www.chicityclerk.com/chicagocitykey/about/citykey-benefits>

⁸ <https://www.healthit.gov/topic/health-it-basics/improved-diagnoses-patient-outcomes>

To: Mayor Elect Lightfoot's Transition Education Committee
From: Greg Darnieder
Re: Postsecondary Education Strategies
Date: 4/14/19

Suggested Initiative: Establish an initiative and possibly the Office of Transition Supports to address the 'wasted high school senior year' to enhance academic, student support, social/emotional support services and transition programs with higher education institutions that enroll the majority of Chicago's high school graduates. A number of the following suggestions go beyond the senior year, however a redesign of the senior year would be the focal point.

The Office of Transition Supports would work collaboratively with CPS' Office of School Counseling and Postsecondary Advising (OSCPA) establishing goals that address the gender, race, income and neighborhood disparities that continue to linger in all too many of Chicago's communities around postsecondary enrollment and completion. Research based college/career stretch goals should be established for CPS, schools, programs along with contracted organizations. Current CPS programs and supports, the groundwork for which has been laid over the past 15 years, need to be adequately resourced. Data needs to be provided to principals, school counselors, and other school level educators, so that program effectiveness can be enhanced in timely ways. In addition, the training of school counselors, postsecondary staff and school building educators must continue to be enhanced and deepened, in order that the most accurate advise can be delivered to students and families.

Commented [GD1]:

What is happening today that should be kept:

- Enhance the data analytic capabilities of OSCPA while establishing district and school data outcomes with the expectation that it is to be acted upon. The disaggregation by program (IB, AP, CTE, sports, clubs, etc.) is an organizing tactic and central to past CPS success; however this has been largely eliminated through understaffing of research and data positions. With the core principle of equity in mind, it is critical that student data be utilized to identify students in neighborhood schools that show potential for meeting the requirements established for scholarships and internships. When CPS became the #1 district in the country with Gates Millennium winners almost half of the students came from neighborhood schools and identified by the former Department of College and Career Preparation.
- Enhance the current Postsecondary training credential by tying it to U of I Urbana, UIC, NEIU, and/or Governors State universities along with private colleges or universities for graduate level credit
- What can be implemented in first 100 days:

- Our young people are a resource – create the Mayor Lightfoot Youth Corps that establishes one or more thematic youth corps in every CPS high school, building off of current and recent past efforts eg. Technology - youth maintaining computers and equipment within their schools; Health – youth in partnership with health providers presenting health workshops throughout their community on lead poisoning, diabetes, importance of healthy eating and exercise, etc.; Construction – youth building playgrounds for elementary schools; the Arts – enhance After School Matters with a teaching component where the skills being learned are then taught to elementary school children; Education – re-establish Future Teachers of Chicago for middle and high school students, etc. Students must be paid as part of the strategy.
- In partnership with higher education institutions, organize a day-long event for all 2019 graduates admitted and attending area postsecondary institutions. The focus would be on the hidden stumbling blocks for college freshmen – dating, parties, roommates, loneliness, intimate relationships, academic supports, money, etc.
- Enhance, expand and create ‘College and Career Centers’ as drop in centers in each high school and located in a high student trafficked corridor. They should be constantly staffed by school counselors, college access coaches and non-profit college access staff, loaded with a minimum number of computers along with current college and career information.

What will take longer to implement:

- Require through CBE policy that all school counselors and college access personnel have a college and career credential before being hired
- Turn the Senior Year of High School into a year of college credit attainment, community service, and high quality internships – Senior year should be designed around each student’s career and postsecondary interests –earning college credits, learning in a high quality internship or meaningful community service. Though the Senior year would be the focal point this should start in the Freshman year.
- Set a CPS goal that ‘x’ % of graduates will earn a minimum of 15, 30 and 60 college credit hours that are transferable to most four year public institutions. This should include at a minimum expansion of any college credit earning strategies such as AP and dual credit.
- Establish high quality summer learning and leadership experiences for rising Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors – on college campuses and with domestic and international organizations – maybe ‘Mayor Lightfoot’s Scholars’ –
- Establish College and Career Centers in partnership with Chicago Library system and key neighborhood organizations as places to obtain college, scholarship information along with an assortment of support services

- Select through an RFP process and evaluator the added value of all outside college access organizations, along with the added value of key CPS CCR strategies around a set of research based CCR metrics eg. FAFSA, college match/fit, enrollment and persistence to graduation, CTE credentials and employment, debt, etc.

What challenges might be encountered:

- Evaluate and realign the goals and resources needed for Learn, Plan, Succeed's success, especially the addition of additional school counselors and college access professionals
- Enhance After School Matters reflecting the reality that youth have skills and knowledge that can assist in developing the skills and knowledge of their peers, younger students, and their communities
- CPS' human capital and financial resources

Ideas from 5 current and past CPS employees are incorporated in my above suggestions.

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot
FROM: Imran Khan, Embarc

Objective addressed:

Increase Post-secondary success so that all who want to can live and thrive in Chicago

Potential initiative:

Expand access to developmental experiences to all students that foster the development of skills required to succeed after high school, create a sense of belonging no matter where they are within our city, expand students' set of positive role models, shift mindsets and ultimately lead to post-secondary success of our students (4 year college, 2 year college, professional pathway, etc.).

How to infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:

Lack of equitable access and experiences is one of the biggest missing elements in our education system trapping us within the cycle of poverty¹. Those who work closest to our students, families, teachers and principals will tell you the need for exposure to change outcomes. This is a fundamental equity, inclusion, justice and education issue that is at the root of our city's greatest challenges.

Studies show that learning outside the classroom builds social, emotional, and academic development, which in turn leads to gains in student achievement including on-time graduation rates, post-secondary enrollment and completion, and improved long-term outcomes in employment, health, and civic engagement². Unfortunately, equity and access to these developmental experiences varies significantly based on income and race. By the time a low income student reaches middle school, they will have spent 6,000 hours less than their middle class peers in the types of outside the classroom developmental experiences that are so critical for long term success³.

While experiential learning is woefully underutilized, it's not due to the unwillingness of educators. In a recent survey of teachers in Chicago, ~90% reported that they would like to implement experiential learning into their lessons⁴. The stumbling block is simply the infrastructure to coordinate these experiences with teachers and institutions across the city.

To overcome the developmental experience gap, Chicago needs a coordinated, transformative effort to scale experiences across our public school system. This initiative will 1) gather stakeholders to identify best practices and key partners to set standards on meaningful learning experiences, how they are implemented, and how they are assessed in order to drive post-secondary success, 2) create a partnership network, 3) deploy resources to teachers including training, tool kits, templates, and collaborative learning opportunities, and 4) evaluate impact, sustain ongoing support for teachers and providers, and develop a storytelling campaign to create transparency and engagement across Chicago.

¹ <https://psycnet.apa.org/buy/2009-19928-005>

²

<https://www.aspeninstitute.org/publications/pursuing-social-and-emotional-development-through-a-racial-equity-lens-a-call-to-action/>

³ <https://www.expandedschools.org/>

⁴ Inspire Survey led by Bain consultants.

Based on the points above, this initiative is inherently about equity, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in its own right. Infusing transparency and accountability will involve setting standards for what makes strong developmental experiences, metrics that ensure all of our students are getting access to these, and accountability for all stakeholders (CPS leadership and teachers, business, cultural institutions, non-profits, etc.) to work together. Ensuring these measures will be critical for this initiative's success.

What is happening today that we need to keep

Research on the importance of developmental experiences has increased exponentially over the last ~10 years. Additionally, a number of nonprofits are working with schools to provide these critical experiences for students (e.g. Embarc, After School Matters, Grey Matter Experience). Schools are also currently implementing personalized learning and striving to implement social-emotional skills. These should continue but can all benefit from being delivered through out-of school learning experiences.

What do we need to implement in the first 100 days

To ensure a truly transformational plan as suggested to our education system and city, it will be crucial to obtain the buy-in from all key stakeholders. During the first 100 days, we propose the following:

- Convene stakeholders together to align on the challenges, and goals and objectives of the initiative we propose
- Partner with schools to build out the model for integrating quality experiences within regular school curriculum most effectively, testing and learning from different models
- Develop a strategic plan for how to rapidly expand experiential learning to all students across Chicago.

What we can plan for longer term implementation

Once we have a model that works and a plan in place, we need to develop the tools and systems necessary to expand experiences. The top reasons teachers don't integrate outside experiential learning into their classrooms are because 1) they don't know how to do it effectively 2) the logistics are complicated 3) they don't have the financial support and 4) they don't understand how to tie it to their existing curriculum.

High-quality and scalable training, simplified logistics through off the shelf experiences that tie to their curriculum, and access to funding through a combination of public, foundation, and private funding sources will be required.

What challenges we might incur while executing the initiative

There are a number of challenges we should be prepared for when pursuing this initiative. These include, but are not limited to:

- Achieving full engagement, buy-in, and coordination of all stakeholders involved
- Understanding and developing the tools/systems required to ensure developmental experiences are as easy to integrate as possible
- Experiential capacity – ensure enough locations are included and able to help create high quality experiences for 350,000 students across the city
- Quality control – ensure experiences have the desired impact on our students' long-term success
- Logistical issues such as planning for school days, securing the right number of chaperones, etc.

To: Education Transition Committee
From: Ilana Zafran Walden

Regarding: Education Transition Committee Memo

Executive Summary:

Mayor Elect Lightfoot has an objective of ensuring all students have access to the quality schools, teachers, and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success.

To advance that objective, I propose the potential initiative of expanding high quality, differentiated, holistic, relevant professional development to all staff who work in Chicago Public Schools.

I. The new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity, inclusion and transformation in this initiative by ensuring holistic professional development is created with input and ongoing feedback from a variety of stakeholders.

Prior to developing and implementing expanded professional development, it will be critical to get input from Chicago Public Schools (CPS) students, parents and employees. Through a series of community meetings, focus groups and surveys, stakeholders should share how they envision their ideal school environment. What would this environment look like, sound like, and feel like in each individual space in the school (i.e. hallways, classrooms, cafeteria)? From this ideal vision of the school, a diverse group of experts including Chicago Public Schools staff, non profit organizations, and education experts can work to identify the types of skills, behaviors, mindsets, and ongoing supports that are needed to create this ideal school environment.

Once this universal list of professional development needs is developed, each school will need to undergo an annual assessment process to identify what the professional development needs are for their unique circumstances. This assessment process should involve both quantitative and qualitative data. The results of the assessment process, the action plan to address the professional development needs of the school's staff and progress made since the last assessment should be shared publicly. Schools should receive time and financial resources for professional development based on their assessments and the individualized need in each school building.

II. The Administration should keep the differentiated, relevant, and high quality professional development that is already taking place.

There are many relevant, high quality professional development initiatives already underway in the district which the Administration should maintain and grow. The district has developed a variety of restorative justice professional development initiatives including professional learning communities specifically for Deans. Additionally, the District has implemented a variety of trauma informed professional developments. Community based organizations provide coaching to schools related to areas such as data analysis, Freshman on Track, post-secondary metrics, SEL skills development and the Five Essentials. Through both central office, as well as network offices, schools receive coaching and support related to effective instruction, social emotional learning, and post-secondary success.

III. In the next 100 days the Administration needs to implement a plan to audit the scope of professional development currently provided.

Many different departments in CPS as well as community based organizations currently provide professional development to CPS staff. Through auditing the current professional development offerings, the Administration will be able to identify the areas in which services are duplicative as well as where there may be gaps in types of professional development provided.

IV. For longer term implementation, the Administration should plan to create universal best practices around professional development and ongoing supports for all adults who work with young people in a school setting.

A universal professional development plan should ensure that all professional development provided in CPS takes into consideration an equity and trauma informed lens. For those working with middle and high school students, all professional development should take into account how adult mindset and skills need to be developed to support students in making a successful post secondary transition. It is imperative that professional development builds the skills of adults to support students who have been historically marginalized. This includes training on social identity; power, privilege, and oppression; implicit bias; and allyship.

Professional Development should be rigorous and action oriented, impacting the way people do their day to day work. Implementation of the professional development should include multiple touchpoints which allow for continued coaching as professionals develop their skills. Professional Development must also include ongoing community building and space for adults to celebrate successes and problem-solve challenges. Schools need access to ongoing resources including money, staffing, and materials in order to provide ongoing support of staff rather than sporadic professional development sessions. School Administrators need to be equipped with in depth knowledge on the areas in which their staff are being trained so that they are able to assess and provide feedback on staff's progress.

All school staff, regardless of their role, need to receive professional development. In order to maximize effectiveness, professional learning communities for school staff in similar roles should be expanded. These professional learning communities will allow school staff to explore relevant topics and learn best practices from one another. School based community partners and other city offices that work with youth also need to receive professional development to ensure that their employees are demonstrating skills and mindsets that are aligned with CPS.

V. The primary challenges the Administration will face include adequate financial and time resources.

Developing, implementing, and providing ongoing evaluation of professional development takes a team dedicated to this initiative. Additionally, schools and community based organizations need substantial time throughout the year to implement expanded professional development and ongoing support.

Education Transition Committee Memo

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: John Kenneth Kozlar

PROMPT: Increase postsecondary success so all who want to can live in and thrive in Chicago

Education is the blueprint for a child's development. In order to nurture our children, we must provide them with a well-rounded blueprint. The sooner we educate our children, the less problems he or she will have in the future. In addition to receiving a strong education in academics, arts, languages, and recreational activities, we must provide the proper resources for our students to thrive on their postsecondary journeys.

The initiative that I would like to introduce is called the *Little Professionals League* (LPL).

In high school, many students are willing to learn, but simply may not have the proper resources available to help them succeed. In Chicago, it is imperative that we retain our students after graduation from the Chicago Public Schools, and give our students all of the necessary tools available. With this new initiative, high school students will be better prepared to live an influential life. The Little Professionals League is designed to be a summer program where students will shadow a variety of professions, so that they can be better equipped in deciding which career path to choose. For example, a high school student who has an interest in becoming a doctor or a plumber will do a 1-2 week internship with a doctor, and then do another 1-2 week internship with a plumber.

When students are introduced to the actual profession, namely shadowing an individual who is already in the profession, the students will be able to see first hand the

day-to-day operations of what it will be like if they choose that particular career path. The participants in LPL will then be able to decide whether their interests in that particular field are reinforced, or allowed them to ponder other potential career paths. Furthermore, the LPL will focus students' energy on their career interests, and allow them to have direct guidance from individuals who are in the profession. Lifelong friendships and mentorships will be created, which will be crucial in the development of our students, and increase postsecondary success.

The new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity, and inclusion in the Little Professionals League by allowing all Chicago Public School High School students to take part in this initiative, regardless of which school they attend or where they live. The more students who take part in the LPL, the more futures we can have a positive impact on as a city. Furthermore, this initiative will allow our students to realize that they can be whatever they want to be in life, and that all it takes is proper nurturing, focus, and a willingness to succeed.

In order to implement this initiative, we will need to reach out to various professions, and have a list of the professions/locations that will be willing to adopt this program during the summer months. The good news is Chicago has a large number of professional groups and organizations within our city (i.e. hospitals, trade unions, law firms, etc.) that I believe will be more than willing to nurture our students. It is when we come together as one city, especially for the education of our youth, that we will be able to achieve endless possibilities and offer a better opportunity for everyone to live a fantastic life in Chicago.

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

From: Jason Coleman

Prompt: Ensure all students have access to the quality schools, teachers and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success. Specifically, the initiative to grow access to sustainable, high-quality afterschool and support programs with an emphasis on closing current opportunity gaps.

I believe that access to a quality education is one of the greatest enablers for helping individuals gain access to a higher quality of life. Schools should serve as a learning lab for youth to help educate them about the world they are preparing to enter and provide them with real-world skills that prepare them for life after college.

As an in-school, after-school and out-of-school time program provider for the past 10 years, I have seen 1st hand how the lack of access to quality programs and educational opportunities can hamper a student's ability to reach their full potential. Equity stands at the core of this issue. In order for youth to dream big, they must first become aware of the opportunities that are available to them. You can't be what you don't see and the depth of your dreams are limited to what you've been exposed to. This is extremely important in our underserved communities where many of the things that we value such as equity, inclusion and diversity simply aren't found.

What's happening today that we need to keep.

There are lot of after-school and summer program providers doing great work throughout the city, but the organizations providing the work are often spread very thin. We need to keep the funding that is provided through DFSS, CHA and other city offices as this funding helps to provide necessary summer and after-school programming for thousands of students throughout the city. These opportunities could be scaled to increase the impact to youth in underserved communities. There is also a lot of great work taking place in the public libraries and parks that help provide students with access to the after-school programming they need.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days.

Over the next 100 days, I think we should be able to quantify what it means for students to have access to quality schools, teachers and supports that are a necessity for their future success and the role that equity, transparency, diversity, accountability and transformation play. We need to be able to identify the supports and structures that all schools need to have in place to achieve those goals and then create a strategy for helping them secure them. All pertinent parties need to be a part of this discussion including: students, parents, teachers, community organizations, non-profits, private industry, philanthropy, schools and the public sector.

What we can plan for the longer-term implementation.

For longer-term implementation, we should have a plan in place that provides funding, supports and structures for schools and outside organizations to continue their programming efforts. This plan should also find a way to scale some of the work that is being

done to better serve ALL students. More collaborations between corporations, foundations, non-profits, schools and the public sector also needs to take place. This cannot take place in isolation and work successfully.

What challenges might we encounter in executing on this initiative.

There is still a huge challenge with ensuring all students have access to these initiatives. Even with increased funding, there still remains a challenge to find the capacity of people and organizations to implement this on such a wide scale. It would really take a collective effort of hundreds of organizations and corporations to effectively implement the plan.

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

From: Jenny Nagaoka, Deputy Director, University of Chicago Consortium on School Research

Objective: Increase postsecondary success so all who want to can live in and thrive in Chicago

A potential initiative: To prepare young people for success in postsecondary education and the demands of the modern workforce, we need to enable educators to give an equal focus to the academic content and rigor of instruction and the social-emotional aspects of learning and the transition to postsecondary.¹

Infusing the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation:

The district has shown improvements in its high school graduation and college enrollment rates, but the lower rates for Black and Latino students suggest that additional approaches are necessary. A greater focus on the social-emotional aspects of students' experiences in school and teachers developing culturally responsive instructional practices show promise for more effectively engaging students of color and creating more equitable learning environments.²

What is happening today that we need to keep: The percentage of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) graduates making an immediate transition to college has increased from 46 percent in 2005 to 71 percent in 2017, nearly doubling the number of CPS graduates in college from 5,000 to 9,800.³ Rather than depending on centralized programs or interventions, underlying these improvements is a strong foundation of systems and structures at the district and school level that relies on practitioners providing support to students to prepare them to graduate and enroll in college.

CPS has built national reputation for its model of improvement using research evidence and data. The district has well-established structures for enabling research, data sharing agreements, using data in schools, and most importantly, a willingness to learn, even if that means hearing what is not working. Top-down one-size-fits-all policies tend to be unevenly implemented and often have unexpected consequences. The central office has supported improving educational attainment by setting priorities, providing data in easily-accessible ways and fostering the internal school capacity to use research and data. The district, schools, and school support organizations have also developed multiple ways to allow practitioners to engage in data and share practices, including freshman teacher teams, quarterly high school institutes, and districtwide counselor meetings. In particular, the focus on Freshman OnTrack as a central strategy and the development of data systems to support these school efforts to improve grades and attendance have been instrumental in improving both high school graduation and college enrollment rates for CPS students.⁴

CPS has emphasized the importance of transitions as key points of intervention. Postsecondary success and high school graduation both depend on a successful transition to high school where students are

¹ Farrington, et al., 2012, Nagaoka, et al., 2015, Nagaoka & Holsapple, 2017.

² Allensworth, et al., 2018; National Commission on Social, Emotional, & Academic Development, 2018.

³ Nagaoka & Seeskin, 2018.

⁴ Moeller, Seeskin, & Nagaoka, 2018.



engaged in their classes, build positive academic habits and skills, and develop a strong academic identity as a student. How educators monitor and support students in ninth grade strongly influences their success and their academic performance for the rest of high school. Besides supporting academics, CPS has also developed data systems and structures that can be used by school practitioners to support students through the procedures and steps of the college choice and enrollment process, including application and FAFSA tracking systems and college readiness guides, as well as partnering with local nonprofit organizations.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days: School principals set the vision for the school and serve as organizational managers and instructional leaders. A new emphasis on the social-emotional aspects of learning, college choice, and student-centered instruction can be difficult to achieve, so it is essential that principals have the supports they need to lead collaboration across the school community and build an effective learning climate.⁵

Support school leaders in providing the training, time, and support to effectively build teams in their school around common goals about academic and social-emotional development. The shift to an equal emphasis on academic and social-emotional development and the surrounding learning environments suggest that principals will need additional training on how to manage teams and all school staff be engaged in formal and informal professional development around learning and development.⁶

What we can plan for longer-term implementation: To ensure each young person is afforded the necessary opportunities to be fully engaged in the college choice process and be successful in postsecondary, it is essential that learning environments are designed to be developmentally appropriate and responsive to the needs, assets, and cultures of the children who inhabit them and that efforts around students are equally balanced with providing educators with what they need to learn and feel safe in engaging in new approaches.

Shifting practice requires structures, opportunities, and protected time for educators and school leaders to engage with data and learn from each other within and across schools. Paying equal attention to social-emotional development as to academic learning requires teachers shift their role from managing students through a prescribed curriculum at a set pace to creating the classroom and school conditions that can nurture each student's social, emotional, and academic development.⁷ It also requires support from school leadership and from fellow teachers to form a community of support. Within schools, this can mean teacher teams focused on student data and sharing practice (e.g., observing each other, giving feedback) and using student data and talking to students (e.g., survey results, attendance, grades, homework completion). It also requires time and resources, including professional development days, cross-school institutes, time in school day to work together, and staff to organize data and facilitate data use.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative: Changes in instructional practice and supporting practitioners in creating positive learning environments take time and intentional efforts to build buy-in and new competencies among practitioners. Trying new practices requires trust and the space to make and then learn from mistakes, which is often difficult under accountability systems. The results of new efforts may take years before clearly measurable results in outcomes are apparent, and will require constant reflection and use of data to monitor progress.

⁵ Allensworth, et al., 2018.

⁶ National Commission on Social, Emotional, & Academic Development, 2018.

⁷ Allensworth, et al., 2018.



TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Katya Nuques

DATE: April 16, 2019

TRANSITION COMMITTEE: Education

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MEMO

A potential initiative:

The creation of an education equity fund to close the achievement gap created by race, poverty, and overall lack of opportunity.

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:

This initiative's main goal is to achieve equity by redirecting public funds specifically to schools, students, and families who have historically received less, and lacked the adequate resources that would allow them to thrive. In the same way that the implemented reforms to the City's Zoning Code created funding for equitable development throughout the City, the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund, I believe any new development in the Loop should create an additional fund that goes specifically to schools in underserved neighborhoods.

The initiative can be transparent in many ways. If the composition of the school board ultimately and properly represented the City of Chicago, by way of an Elected Representative School Board, then the board could play a significant role in putting together a transparent process to make decisions about the distribution of the fund.

However, until board elections take place, there needs to be a transparent, fair process that prioritizes the schools with the biggest educational gaps. The absence of an Elected Representative School Board would necessitate the creation of a citywide council or committee to work on a process for distribution of the education equity funds. I believe this body could work with the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, to take advantage of the work they have already done in relation to educational adequacy/gaps by race, ethnicity, and geographical region. This would also add accountability to the process. I believe meetings should be open to the public, in order to add both transparency and accountability.

The idea of the creation of an education fund that will specifically and primarily address inequity is innovative and transformational. It also speaks to the values Mayor-Elect Lightfoot continues to affirm. I think this initiative directly addresses the issue without continuing to point fingers and making it someone else's problem. Even though we know that the state constitution mandates that the "primary responsibility for financing the system of public education" belongs solely to the state; I believe the City of Chicago needs to play a much bigger role, not only from an advocacy perspective, but as a problem solver. We need to implement solutions, so that the Chicago Public School District, whose student population is over 80 percent black and Latino, stops being the school district in Illinois with the greatest adequacy gap per pupil at \$5,194.

There is something very important that needs to happen in the next 100 days. I believe that in order for Mayor-Elect Lightfoot and her team to know exactly where they start, as well as to increase awareness among Chicagoans around inequity levels across communities, we need to have a baseline. A scorecard with indicators in the areas of health, poverty, educational attainment, crime levels, basic services, and others would serve that purpose. This could work as an interactive map with indicators per community area. Many organizations/city agencies/other institutions have created a version of this at some point. Therefore, it should not be complicated for the city to vet the existing maps, and compile an "official" interactive map to compare different neighborhoods, schools, etc. I think this in itself would be a powerful vehicle to help us with long-term planning and implementation. As the fund is created, other revenue sources are identified, and the mechanism for distribution is established, this could become a long-term strategy for addressing inequity in education.

There are always challenges when trying to implement initiatives that address equity. People in more affluent neighborhoods will take issue with this approach. But I believe we need an initiative like this to send a direct message that unapologetically says: As a City, we believe in equal opportunity. Because not every child is afforded the same chances, we need to make sure children who grow up in less affluent neighborhoods (disproportionally Latino and African American), are given a better opportunity to reach their potential.



COLLABORATIVE FOR ACADEMIC, SOCIAL, AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

April 17, 2019

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TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Karen Van Ausdal, Senior Director of Practice, CASEL

CPS has achieved unprecedented growth in recent years, benefiting thousands of students across the district. Today, significant work remains to ensure that *every* student has an opportunity for personal and academic success. One of the most profound areas for future growth is the district's work in social and emotional learning (SEL). We believe that by deepening its investment in SEL, Chicago will be better able to fulfill its mission to provide a learning environment in which students have the support and instruction they need to thrive.

SEL is the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Decades of research have demonstrated SEL's positive impact on students' academic performance; relationships; engagement; attitudes about school, self, and others; behavior; and emotional wellbeing. Through a systemic approach to SEL, schools can become places of information *and* inspiration, where learning is approached as a dynamic relationship through which students find the support they need to fulfill their potential. With the broader support of the Mayor's office and the city, CPS can build on the great work they have begun to reach all students in all neighborhoods in the city.

Mayor-Elect Objective: Ensure all students in CPS have access to the schools, teachers, and supports they need to succeed.

Potential Initiative: Deepen support and citywide alignment and collaboration for SEL implementation in CPS, ensuring that all schools are safe and welcoming and equip students with the social and emotional competencies they need for success in college, career, and civic life.

Supporting SEL in CPS can enhance the new administration's commitment to equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation by:

- Ensuring all schools offer a welcoming climate and that all teachers are knowledgeable of trauma-informed practices and integrate social and emotional competencies to provide **equitable education experiences** for all students.
- Enabling the district to **transform schools into student-centered spaces** that empower students to use their voices and that are responsive to the needs of the whole child.
- Supporting intentional climate and instructional strategies for SEL and expanding proactive and restorative (rather than punitive) responses to behavior so that CPS can **interrupt the school to prison pipeline** that disproportionately affects students of color.

What is happening today that we need to keep: The following CPS efforts should be sustained:

- Providing district supports through the CPS Office of Social and Emotional Learning (OSEL), including Network SEL Specialists who deliver professional development and coaching for all schools.

- Using **evidence-based curricula, strategies, and interventions** to promote students' SEL competency across all tiers within a Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework, with a focus on Tier 1 (universal/proactive) classroom and schoolwide practices.
- Maintaining the **CPS School Climate Standards and supportive school certification** process, which guides schools in building relational trust, physical and emotional safety, systems for schoolwide environment and leadership, and student and parent engagement. Currently, nearly 70% of schools have earned a Supportive School designation—demonstrating a growing commitment to and practice of these school climate standards.
- Replacing exclusionary discipline practices with **restorative practices** that build community and respond to student misbehavior as a learning opportunity. Since initiating this effort in 2011-12, the district has seen consecutive years of decreased suspensions, with an overall decrease of 77%.
- Increasing awareness of the impact of trauma on students and staff through trainings, and the **development of trauma-informed classroom strategies** (welcoming rituals, classroom meetings, and relationship-building).
- Delivering **trauma-focused, small-group, and individual counseling** to students through CPS-related service providers and community mental health agencies.
- Ensuring **social workers** support students most in need while building the capacity of school staff to implement SEL practices for all students.
- Adopting a **Student Bill of Rights** to allow students to put their SEL competencies into action, expanding opportunities for meaningful youth voice.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days: CASEL recommends that the Mayor's team partner with CPS and the Office of SEL to understand their comprehensive SEL model and visit schools doing this transformational work. With this understanding, the Mayor's office can play a critical role in aligning partnerships for SEL across the city—especially as it pertains to trauma. There are many educational, philanthropic, government, and community efforts that could be maximized through more intentional partnership with the district.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation: To deepen and sustain SEL in CPS long term, we recommend:

- Facilitating CPS partnerships with local universities and other **principal and teacher pipelines** to ensure SEL is part of preparation and onboarding for all CPS staff.
- Equipping all CPS schools with an intentional strategy to support **schoolwide SEL** in school and classroom climate, instructional practices, and SEL supports that promote equitable outcomes.
- Continuing to focus on **reducing disproportionality** of student suspensions and expulsions by building adult capacity for SEL instruction and restorative practices.
- Developing a collaborative, comprehensive districtwide (ODLSS, OSHW, Safety/Security, Teacher's Union, etc.) **strategy for understanding and responding to trauma**, including recognition of the protective factor that schoolwide SEL provides for both students and adults.
- Increased opportunities for students to engage in a **mentoring** relationship—whether with a school staff member, a community agency, or a peer.
- Actively engaging **parents as partners** in building positive school communities, particularly in using restorative practices.
- Developing a strong model for **high school SEL** instruction and SEL competency development through integration in academic content.
- Leveraging the **Community Schools** Initiative partnership to align SEL practices and programs (schoolwide climate expectations, restorative practice coach, behavior health team, etc.).
- Exploring the use of SEL strategies citywide to unite diverse groups in equity efforts: **Chicago as an SEL city**.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative: One of the challenges we face is ensuring that SEL supports and coaching are equitably distributed. In creating a comprehensive model of SEL and supportive schools (whether trauma, Restorative Practices, behavioral/mental health), we should also recognize that SEL is needed by all students and adults while also being responsive to the needs and strengths of students, schools, and communities. "One size fits all" does not always fit all.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our perspectives on the urgency and potential for uniting citywide efforts to support the social and emotional well-being of the young people and adults of Chicago.

To: Major-elect Lori Lighthfoot

From: Luisiana Meléndez- Member Education Transition Committee

Campaign Objective: Ensure kindergarten readiness through access to quality early childhood education for all children in Chicago.

Proposed Initiative: Expand the number of early childhood programs available to children and families in Chicago and align their developmental and learning goals as well as their quality criteria.

a) What is happening today:

Nationally as well as locally, early childhood education has been gaining recognition and support as a powerful means of addressing disparities in educational achievement. During the last decades, the city of Chicago has responded by growing the number of programs, and kinds of programs, available to families and communities. Subsidized early care and education, preschool, and home visiting represent some of the most successful early childhood offerings serving children with a wide spectrum of needs and developmental profiles. All of these initiatives have produced strong evidence of their effectiveness to foster strong developmental and learning outcomes in young children. The fact that these initiatives serve an overarching purpose in different ways demonstrates the importance of an early childhood system that is responsive to the needs of different children, communities, and families.

Nevertheless, the multiplicity of programs, and corresponding funding streams also posit challenges. The fragmented nature of the system, evident in the varying eligibility criteria and the multiple funding streams make it hard for families to 1) find the best program for the needs of their child and/or family; and 2) transition from one system to the next. This places additional demands on families that may be already vulnerable and overstretched. In consequence, although the flexibility and variety of early childhood programs is unequivocally desirable, the need for greater alignment of program goals and smoother transitions among programs continues to be an unachieved goal.

b) What we need to implement immediately:

Increasing access to quality programs is arguably the number one priority to ensure that early childhood can effectively contribute to improve the developmental and learning outcomes of all children in Chicago, which would ultimately result in improved kindergarten readiness. In the long term, a better alignment of program goals, and recognition that these goals may be attained in different ways, will also serve this purpose.

However, any attempt to grow the number of early childhood programs that share a common vision of how ensure that all early childhood programs effectively prepare children below kindergarten age must be undertaken with the following caveats:

- Acknowledgement of the skills and understandings **all** children bring to school, which are grounded in the experiences each child experiences at home and in the communities they belong.
- Appreciation of these skills and understandings, including home language and culture, as representative of children's capacity for development and learning and therefore valuable assets of great importance to further development and learning.
- Recognition that although the knowledge and skills some children bring from their homes and communities may not directly align with those which schools value and see as indicative of 'kindergarten readiness', these understandings have the potential to be the foundation for acquiring the competencies that will foster school success in kindergarten and beyond.

In consequence, initial efforts to better prepare young children for kindergarten must:

- Operate under a strength perspective that recognizes that all groups and communities have valuable assets and resources that must be marshaled to address the often overwhelming challenges some children growing up in these groups and communities face.
- Function under a vision that incorporates common developmental and learning goals for children birth-to-four without compromising practice that is child-centered as well as culturally and linguistically responsive to the children, families, and communities served by the different programs.

c) What can we plan for longer-term implementation?

The creation of a more cohesive and well-articulated early childhood system is by nature of its complexity, a longer-term goal. This enterprise should also be accompanied by initiatives to improve the remuneration of early care and education workers, particularly those that employed outside of early childhood programs located in public schools. In addition, creating and implementing professional development pathways that recognize the experiences and knowledge of this particular segment of the early care and education workforce, comprised in its majority by women of color without a higher education degree, is essential.

Memo: Lightfoot Education Transition Committee

Meredith Bluhm-Wolf

Objective: Ensure all students in Chicago Public Schools (CPS) have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed.

We have seen incredible progress over the past decade in CPS, and though there are many things the district is doing well, there is much work to be done to ensure all of our students are receiving an excellent education. As we consider the district's next steps, we need to keep in mind the importance of incorporating student and parent perspectives to ensure that any future changes are rooted in community aspirations. An example of parent involvement that should continue under the new administration is parent's role in continuing to shape the direction of their schools through involvement in Local School Councils.

My recommendations to transform Chicago's education system in order to ensure equity for all students focuses on the three topic areas listed below:

1. Human Capital and Talent Pipelines
2. Data and Accountability
3. Innovation and Community Partnerships

Human Capital and Talent Pipelines: To address many of the inequities that still plague our system, we need to create a stronger teacher talent pipeline focused on recruiting diverse, high quality educators. No education initiative of any kind can succeed without highly capable human talent. We must continue to incentivize the placement and retention of exceptional teachers in all CPS schools, including the highest-need schools, through initiatives like the Opportunity Schools Program. It is also critical today that every CPS student have access to high quality mental health and social work professionals. Unfortunately, many students are exposed to trauma in our schools which affects their ability to learn and to have productive classroom environments. Teachers and social workers need to be better equipped to deal with these unfortunate circumstances in order to help children begin to heal and be better learners and students.

Additionally, we need to invest in ensuring that we have a pipeline of high-quality, diverse school principals and administrators who understand issues of equity. In particular, an immediate need is to address the dire teacher shortages that exist in key subject areas such as special education. We must also recruit teachers that share the backgrounds of their students over the longer-term.

Grow your own and alternative pathways to teacher certification represent one clear way to address both the issue of teacher shortages as well as increasing diversity in the profession in the near and long term. Additionally, research shows that alternative pathway teachers are at least as capable as traditional pathway teachers. Programs like Teach For America also work to actively place teachers in

difficult to fill roles; two-thirds of their current corps in Chicago teaches high-needs subjects, and nearly two-thirds identify with their students as a person of color and/or a person coming from a low-income background. We need to continue these partnerships and also think creatively about how to expand new pathways to the teaching profession, while maintaining a high bar for the quality of candidates.

Data and Accountability: Access to high-quality data on student and school performance has been essential to the progress we've seen in CPS over the past decade; it must be sustained. The SQRP performance system has made it much easier for parents and community members to understand the health of their neighborhood school, and to become better advocates for the needs of their students. It has also allowed the district to more easily identify which schools need intensive support and to hold up exemplars, so that we can better identify what's working and learn from individual school's successes.

To that end, CPS should continue to partner with the University of Chicago's To&Through Project, which has shared incredibly important information on school's Freshman OnTrack rates. The data from To&Through made an irrefutable case for investing in all of our students, proving what students from low-income neighborhoods could achieve when they received the same support as their more affluent peers. The insight that this data provides is essential to CPS's continued success.

Innovation and Community Partnerships: Teachers, principals and school administrators cannot address all of the issues that effect the trajectory of our students' lives. Chicago is fortunate to have a robust non-profit sector. CPS should continue to explore ways that it can partner with community-based organizations to meet the needs of children. CPS must encourage and grow these partnerships. It should consider how school staff might identify the specific needs of their student populations, including such needs as enhanced teacher training around trauma-informed instruction or mitigating implicit bias, and then be provided access to a wealth of resources from local nonprofits to address these needs.

It's essential that we prepare Chicago's students for an ever-changing workforce. Currently many schools are not positioned to give students the skills necessary to succeed in the twenty-first century. We must support schools to reimagine their approach to instruction and overall curriculum design to better equip students for the future. Community partnerships will be instrumental in driving this innovation. Teacher training around personalized learning, access to workforce development programming, high-quality career and technical education (CTE) and much more could be made common practice through these types of partnerships.

Again, in reflecting upon everything that has been shared above, what is foundational to all of this work is talent and investing in human capital; everything we do requires committed, talented, capable people. We need to continue to support the individuals working at all levels of the education system, and to think creatively about how to attract new passionate, dedicated people to the profession. Additionally, parent and student input should be solicited at the classroom, school, network and system levels to ensure that all innovation is community-oriented. Finally, community partnerships need to continue and grow in order to provide additional support to families that help children to achieve success in the classroom and beyond.

AFTER SCHOOL matters®

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot
FROM: Mary Ellen Caron, Chief Executive Officer of After School Matters

On behalf After School Matters, thank you for the honor of allowing us to share our vision for Chicago's future – which of course will ultimately be determined by our youth.

The three overarching education system objectives that you laid out are admirable and give us confidence that your administration will recognize the importance of a youth development-focused framework. Such a perspective acknowledges that young people are continually developing, with or without the proper supports. But with the very best supports, our young people will advance along each domain of youth development with the awareness and confidence necessary to integrate their gains, thus empowering their journey into emerging adulthood. This should give all Chicagoans hope for a brighter future.

We have chosen to focus on your second objective: ensuring all students in CPS have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed. From our particular vantage point, we will pay close attention to the concepts of *access* and *supports*. But the concept of *success* will only be achieved if all of Chicago can take to heart the core principle of youth development – that each and every young person has tremendous value not just in who they may become someday, but in who they are today. We must honestly ask ourselves as a city if we truly believe that. Unfortunately, when observing the manner in which many adults look at teenagers today, we quickly realize how much work we have to do. With this in mind, we at After School Matters choose to highlight the following initiative – to leverage the best enrichment opportunities the city can provide for our most marginalized and disadvantaged young people in order to ensure that all Chicagoans believe in their inherent worth and value. While our experience will be particularly relevant to high school students, the principles remain the same across the spectrum of youth development.

Over the past three decades, but particularly in the last 10 years, Chicago has invested in an out-of-school time learning and enrichment system that delivers quality opportunities at significant scale. That is a huge success that many other cities across the nation are seeking to emulate, and credit must be given to the two previous administrations for their leadership, as well as to the city agencies, youth organizations, and Chicago Public Schools that collaborate as true partners to make the system a reality. This success comes from an acknowledgment that no single entity can do this work alone. Rather, we must leverage our combined resources in creative ways to support our young people.

The quality of these enrichment programs, and their strength-based outlook, is what makes them effective. So we must continue to set high standards and ensure that all programs deliver 21st century skills alongside content area skills in fields that excite young people and lead to careers. We must promote a project-based learning framework that gives our youth the chance to make mistakes but carry on toward a finished project with the support of peers and adult mentors; and then showcase that project to families, communities, and the broader public.

It is critical to our collective future that we, at minimum, maintain the current scale of our youth enrichment landscape. One Summer Chicago now reaches more than 30,000 youth. After School Matters alone provides more than 26,000 opportunities annually to high school teens, reaching every single community, with focused concentration in high-poverty neighborhoods. Our programs provide teens with a monetary stipend that reduces

barriers to participation and shows young people the value of their time and efforts, while making a modest economic impact on families and communities. They offer exposure to an entire world of opportunities that our youth from under-resourced neighborhoods may not otherwise have thought available. This is access driving equity. It is transforming tens of thousands of young lives, countless community blocks and vacant lots, and has started to turn the tide in our most vulnerable communities. But it has yet to transform Chicago in the manner we have set out through our stated initiative.

The immediate need is to ensure our young people are supported in the coming summer months, when unfortunately violence is likely to increase. In past summers, we have seen at least one additional application for every available opportunity, so we must address this demand gap which falls hardest on our youth most in need of a safe, productive space. Creative, thoughtful solutions and innovative partnerships are urgently needed to close these gaps. Recently, After School Matters began partnering with the Chicago Police Department to train Officers to become program instructors – and the results have been transformational for youth, communities, and the Officers themselves. Other programs have begun to more intentionally focus on identifying and addressing an issue specific to their community. This promotes youth voice and choice. It showcases our young people not as problems to be solved, but as those best positioned to find solutions.

Exacerbating the demand gap is an access gap with regard to youth transportation, as teens who are not in summer school do not receive a reduced rate on public transit. Given the youth and communities who most want and deserve these opportunities, this is a critical barrier.

In the mid-term, we need to elevate support for our most under-represented youth. For example, at After School Matters we must increase access for young males and Latinx teens, as they are currently under-represented in our programs. We also must help to amplify the voices of our most marginalized groups within the already-marginalized demographic of Chicago teenagers. This can take the form of high standards and accountability around what it means for an enrichment program to truly be a safe space for undocumented youth, homeless youth, LGBTQ youth, diverse learners, and more. In so doing, we will move from isolation toward greater diversity and ultimately to inclusion.

The biggest challenge we face is a mistaken belief that all of the above components are ‘nice-to-haves’. Such a belief is at the very heart of inequity, as it assumes that not all youth deserve quality opportunities to discover their potential. Chicago’s youth enrichment landscape cannot be taken for granted. It is, in fact, a must-have.

Just over a month ago, we lost one of our teens to gun violence in the Auburn Gresham community - a bright young teen named Dareyona who had participated in our programs throughout her high school years and was well on her way to developing into a thoughtful, successful, and powerful young woman. One bullet stopped her development in its tracks. We ask ourselves, what more we can do? And of course we will do more – today, this summer, next year. But the ultimate answer is that we need our city to agree that every single young person – every child, adolescent, teen, and young adult – has tremendous worth and value for who they are right now. It will take all of us to turn the tide, but the result will be the strongest foundation that a city can have for its future.

We thank you for allowing us to share our vision, and for smiling whenever you see a Chicago teen.

Gratefully,


Mary Ellen Caron

TO: Mayor Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Maricela Garcia

PROMPT: Objective1: Ensure all student have access to the quality early childhood education experiences they need to enter kindergarten ready to learn.

- Potential Initiative

Engage community-based organizations and Chicago families in the decisions about the best strategies for the successful implementation of Universal Pre-K.

- How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative.

Universal Pre-K for all 4-year-olds is a sound policy for the city of Chicago. However, the design did not include the input of those directly affected/benefited by this policy, such as the families of young children. The communication and participation of community-based organizations was also insufficient through the policy development process. As such, this administration has an opportunity to convene these key stakeholders to uphold the value of Diversity and Inclusion. Residents of Chicago also need to know the long-term funding strategy to sustain this initiative and to expand it to all families regardless of income level. Adhering to these expectations would align with the values of Transparency and Accountability.

- As it pertains to this initiative

- The main strategy of Universal Pre-K is to make it available to all families through the Chicago Public School (CPS) system. Even though CPS plays a strong role in making it possible to reach large numbers of children, Universal Pre-K must preserve the role of community-based organizations (CBO) offering programs for working families. Some of the conversations around the implementation of Universal Pre-K have been to reduce or eliminate the role of CBOs serving this age population. However, CBOs should remain an option for working families. Different from CPS, CBOs provide all day (10 hours) and year-round programs (including the summer) to support the schedules of working families. The partnership with CBOs is critical to reach a true universal system that reflects and attends to the needs of all Chicago families.
- In the next 100 days, we need to implement a diverse and inclusive task force that includes families and CBOs to engage in a constructive conversation to ensure that the design and policy that supports Universal Pre-K meets the diverse needs of Chicago families. The recommendations should be taken into consideration to ensure the success of this ambitious and forward-thinking initiative. During this period, it would be important to also convene conversations between CPS and CBOs

to ensure that they establish communication and see each other as partners rather than competitors.

- The longer-term implementation includes identifying the communities of greater need for early childhood education programs, and assessing whether CPS or CBOs would be the best options based on family needs. This would be necessary to allocate resources more strategically and foster collaboration rather than competition.
- Some of the challenges of executing Universal Pre-K are securing long-term funding to expand it across the city and offering it to every child who wants or needs to participate. Chicago can learn from the experience in New York city. After more than four years of establishing Universal Pre-K, the city has been able to only reach 50 percent of age eligible children primarily due funding challenges. Chicago has a great opportunity to implement a transformational program, but more stakeholders must be involved, the financial question must be answered, and lessons from other cities should be considered.

MEMO DRAFT

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot
FROM: Mimi LeClair
TRANSITION COMMITTEE: Education

Initiative: Youth Employment Services Program (now titled Great Opportunities, GO)

Program Objective: Over the past 20 years, Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago's Youth Development Services has provided opportunities to thousands of youth so that they gain meaningful work experience. We help youth members enrolled in high school, recent high school graduates, and those without high school diplomas achieve post-secondary and career goals. It is our pleasure to teach, train, and elevate our city's next workforce.

Boys and Girls Clubs will expand upon its currently limited college and career readiness activities to create a robust, intentional program to include structured elements and a framework that will focus on providing youth in middle and high school exposure and experiences to college and career options and the required educational paths to achieve them.

Our objective is to connect youth and young adults to leadership development activities and civic engagement opportunities through work-related training and post-secondary education. We also use individual training accounts to provide our members with occupational skills training. Participants in Youth Development Services can receive certifications and licenses in health care fields such as: pharmacy technician, dental assistant, and phlebotomy, and industries like construction, security, manufacturing, and transportation logistics.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago's Youth Development Services offer youth an opportunity to be the ideal employee and a global citizen through developing the skills needed to gain entry-level employment in today's competitive job market.

Eligibility: Youth ages 16-24 who have a barrier to employment

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:

The mission of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Chicago is to enable all young people, especially those who need us the most. Therefore, the new administration must ensure that our program is launched and implemented in communities with an identified need. The administration should also ensure that provisions are in place to ensure that families who are able to financially support their youth do not benefit from this resource which is designated for low income families.

As it pertains to this initiative:

- **What is happening today that we need to keep?**

MEMO DRAFT

- Students have opportunities to receive college credit, technical apprenticeships, and job placement support through CPS's dual credit courses, STEM schools, and CTE programs.
- The expansion of Early College and Career Credentials enabled 46% of CPS high school students to participate in these opportunities in 2018.
- 131 CTE programs enable CPS high school students to develop skills and earn credentials in a particular field with credit transfer to City College of Chicago.
- Articulation agreements with 4-year partner universities to allow students to transfer into the school or a certain program with junior-level standing.
- Expanded tuition and other supports to enable more residents to access and complete post-secondary credentials
- **What we need to implement in the next 100 days**
 - Communication to schools and Community Based Organizations outlining the initiative
 - Recruiters assigned to various regions to connect interested youth with the service
 - Identify funding sources to support program implementation and sustainability
- **What can we plan for longer-term implementation**
 - Program expansion, including, but not limited to,
 - Creation of post-secondary education goals and exposure
 - Plan to establish partnerships with local employers
 - College preparatory activities, such as, academic advising, SAT preparation, summer writing institutes focused on the college application process and financial aid.
 - Partnership with Colleges of Chicago
 - Space and time within neighborhood high schools for youth to have access to the program
 - Summer Learning Plan for all high school students, while also providing funding for the summer learning opportunities
 - College and Career Coordinators responsible for creating, implementing and supporting the College and Career Readiness activities for youth.
- **What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative**
 - Youth not being equipped with basic skills to successfully pass certification exams
 - Students are not always choosing pathways that best match the labor market demand due to a lack of information and effective advising.
 - Lack of student supports
 - Lack of communication and partnerships between Boys and Girls Clubs of Chicago and City Colleges of Chicago



Transition Memo to Lightfoot Team

Name: Maria Whelan, President & CEO

Transition Committee: Education

Prompt: Ensure all young children have access to the quality early childhood experiences needed to enter Kindergarten ready to thrive.

Initiative: Establish community-level collaborations to support recruitment, enrollment, and consistent attendance in preschool and other early learning programs.

Infusing the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation: The implementation of Universal Pre-K is a transformative step for Chicago's educational system. Quality preschool, and quality early learning and care services throughout the birth to five years, make a meaningful and long-lasting difference in the lives of children and their families, and comprise a critical strategy for reducing racial gaps in achievement and educational attainment. However, if children never enroll in these programs or attend inconsistently, they miss out on these benefits. With 50 years of experience working with families in very disadvantaged communities, I AFC has learned that families living in deep poverty and facing other complex barriers—the very families who might benefit most from quality early learning programs—are also the least likely to enroll if there are not intentional efforts to engage these parents and support them through what can be a confusing and cumbersome enrollment process. Furthermore, families facing multiple stresses may struggle to support their children's consistent attendance. Research has shown that chronic absenteeism in early childhood—defined as missing 10% or more of scheduled school days, regardless of the reason for absence—is a strong predictor of poor attendance and poor achievement in later grades. Current efforts to address chronic absenteeism typically focus on the older grades, but focusing on this issue in early childhood can help establish strong attendance patterns and positive attachment to school that can have long-lasting benefits for children and families.

What is happening today that we need to keep: The City is investing significant resources to ensure that families know about their options for high-quality early learning programs. This summer, the City, in partnership with Illinois Action for Children, will support local collaborations in key communities to engage a wide range of stakeholders in supporting families to enroll their children in Chicago Early Learning programs. Chicago Public Schools has committed to ensuring that local school principals engage in these collaborations, which will result in schools having greater access to social services that can help address the barriers to consistent attendance that many families face.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days: The Mayor's Office can shine a light on the importance of schools and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) recruiting and supporting the consistent attendance of children in priority populations (defined by

the Illinois Early Learning Council as homeless children; children of teen parents; children in the state's Department of Children & Family Services system, including children in foster care; children with disabilities; children in poverty and deep poverty; and children whose families are linguistically-isolated). This can be done by:

- Establishing goals for enrollment of children in priority populations in Universal Pre-K and other Chicago Early Learning programs.
- Work with CPS to make chronic absenteeism in preschool and K-3 a key criterion in school quality ratings.
- Convene a Chronic Absenteeism Prevention Taskforce to develop recommendations for how to support consistent attendance in the early grades in every school citywide.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation: Helping families address the range of complex issues they navigate each, and which impact enrollment/attendance in early learning programs, requires a concerted, coordinated community effort, rather than relying on the local school to undertake this work alone. Schools lack resources to support families of chronically absent children, and too often are not well connected to community-based resources that could address families' needs. Every community in the city needs a community collaboration focused on supporting early enrollment and attendance. The City can support these collaborations with small grants to community-based institutions to provide the "backbone" support that this type of collective impact work will require.

In addition, School principals, faculty and staff frequently unintentionally exacerbate chronic absenteeism in the early childhood years by implementing ineffective policies and approaches to supporting consistent attendance. These school personnel lack training in effective approaches such as "nudge letters," schoolwide campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of attendance, and strategies for quickly identifying and addressing attendance barriers. The City can partner with CPS to ensure that school leaders and front office staff are trained in how to most effectively support attendance.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative: The application and enrollment process for Chicago Early Learning, while improving each year, remains complex and difficult for parents in priority populations to navigate. The City must continue to improve this process and the technology that supports it.

For the chronic absenteeism work, the lack of sufficient social work and nursing staff in elementary schools is a significant obstacle. In our work in the North Lawndale READS initiative, we have been very successful in reducing chronic absenteeism, resulting in large achievement gains for students. However, we recognize that in addition to the low-cost, schoolwide strategies referenced above, our ability to provide intensive management to families facing significant barriers has been crucial to our success. Currently, resources are not available in most schools to provide these intensive (though highly impactful and cost-effective) services.

Name: **Niketa Brar**

Transition Committee: **Education**

Initiative: **Rebuilding Public Trust in Chicago's Education System through Equity-In-All Process Reforms**

Problem Statement: Chicago Public Schools educate over 350,000 young people every year, making CPS the farthest reaching branch of city government. But while CPS shows up in many Chicagoans' everyday lives, decisions made at the district level often feel far removed from community voice. As a result, too many residents are left feeling powerless to change their child's educational future. While leaders at CPS focus on increasing educational quality across our system, the existing implementation structure is built for a top-down approach that undermines the likelihood of success for even the best ideas. Chicagoans crave a true democracy that is accountable to the public; without transforming CPS to address this need, any other educational reforms will fail to meet their full potential.

True transformation of this system requires addressing a history of decisions made about communities without their inclusion, including decisions that created and perpetuated racial disparities. Repairing this legacy will require comprehensive reforms that center the Lightfoot administration's values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation.

Solution Framework: To address an urgent need for comprehensive reforms, Chicago Public Schools should adopt an "Equity in All" approach to reform four key areas:

1. *People: Who we hire, where they go, and how we support their growth*

Hiring in Chicago Public Schools should reflect the diversity of our student body, but we must not stop there. All CPS staff should be supported in growing their practice through racial equity trainings, tools, and decision frameworks. For example, while our city supports restorative justice policies, we have not sufficiently funded training to ensure that our educators have the necessary support for implementation to transform our schools. Additionally, we should audit the number and type of personnel positions in schools through a lens of the student populations at each school. Such an analysis may show, for example, that majority-Black schools are disproportionately funding security personnel while regional magnet schools that disproportionately enroll White students also hire significantly more art teachers and librarians.

2. *Policies: How we review and revise inequities in our existing system*

Like every public school system in the country, our model was built on exclusionary policies and structures that will perpetuate inequity until they are fundamentally rewritten to achieve different outcomes. Rectifying each of these will take time and requires a strong, independent body that has earned the trust of the public. The Office of Equity should be moved out from under the authority of the CEO and instead made directly accountable to the school board, with authority that matches the CEO of schools. This structure is in line with national models and creates an independent body appointed by the school board. This office should operate with three key authorities – *(1) to extend the authority of the existing CPS Inspector General to respond to public requests addressing inequitable policies, (2) to establish a publicly reported Equity Scorecard, and (3) to develop policy recommendations for the CEO to implement in future action.* An annual evaluation of this office should be done to ensure its work is deemed credible by the public.

3. *Processes: How to ensure equity and inclusion guide future decision-making*

While an independent Office of Equity can systematically review existing policies and recommend reforms, CPS must also change how future decisions are made, evaluated, and revised through an equity lens. To support this work, CPS should institute the use of the Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) for decisions made at the department, school, network, and district levels. At each level, these REIAs must be available to the responsible authority above it. At the district level, decisions on policies with a direct impact on students should publish the REIAs publicly before any decisions are made. This stipulation is most important for all CPS budgets.

4. *Resources: How we prioritize the expenditure of dollars, time, and energy*

While the current student-based budgeting formula is inherently implicated in each of the three prior areas, this specific policy has such a wide and deep impact that it merits particular mention. The Student-Based Budgeting formula should be replaced by an Equity Funding Formula built through community guidance. Tackling the school funding formula also requires a deep look at a portfolio system that disproportionately enrolls Black and Latino students in military and trade programs while our selective enrollment schools disproportionately enroll White students. This modern-day ‘separate but equal’ system reminds us that a school choice model that doesn’t address inequity in transit, family income, and information access will always perpetuate inequity.

Process Framework: Given that the issue underlying all educational inequity in Chicago is an inherent disparity in whose voices matter to our public leaders, the reform process is equally as important as the reforms themselves. The relationship between students, families, educators, and Chicago Public Schools is deeply fractured and requires a multi-phased approach to ensure that future changes can be successful.

Phase I: Naming and Healing Harms

To rebuild trust with the public, Chicago Public Schools should begin with a community healing process. Communities that have experienced harm because of decisions made about their children – such as the sites of the 50 school closings, where closings were threatened, and where community surveys indicate the highest levels of mistrust of government – should be prioritized for this process, which should be coordinated with and through existing community-based organizations validated by broad community support and trained restorative justice practitioners.

Phase II: Reparations

Harmful school policies do not occur in isolation. From Willis Wagons to the decimation of public housing to massive school closings, decisions about Chicago public education were historically coupled with, or precipitated, massive economic losses in real estate, local business, and overall community health across Chicago neighborhoods. To repair this harm, Mayor Lightfoot should view massive scale community investment, including educational investments, to the most harmed neighborhoods as a rightful set of community reparations necessary to repair the harms of the past. While this should not be limited to investment in schools, Chicago Public Schools must be a core vehicle for investment in these communities. In the first ten years of the implementation of an equity-based school funding formula, a separate category of school funding should exist to ensure targeted supports to areas that are named by an elected committee of external, independent historians with expertise on relevant topics.

Phase III: Long-Term Public Accountability

To ensure that this process is accountable to a publicly accountable body, all of the reforms offered above should be adopted and overseen by an elected school board through an electoral process designed to limit the influence of special interests. Without a body elected to oversee these reforms, it is difficult to generate outcomes legitimized by the public’s trust.



Austin Community Action Council
Chicago Public Schools
Network 3 Office
5101 W. Harrison St
Chicago, IL 60644

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

From: Maretta Brown-Miller and Natasha Smith Walker, Austin Community Action Council

Transition Committee: Education

Prompt: Ensure that all students in Chicago Public Schools have access to the schools, teachers and opportunities that supports their needs to succeed.

Potential initiative: Aligned to the [Austin Quality of Life Plan \(QLP\)](#) as well as the emphasis on growing the Community Schools Initiative in the [Mayoral Education Transition Plan](#) - Reinvest in the Austin community by recognizing underutilized space in our active low-enrolled schools as an asset rather than a liability. This open space is an opportunity to house a broad range of community-based reinvestments that take the Community Schools concept a step further. Invest in 1 to 2 West Side-based Community Hubs by putting the services, businesses, and other resources into the unused space to address the critical needs the QLP articulates (e.g. job training, manufacturing/other jobs, parent learning, family health/wellness, fitness/recreation, arts, affordable housing, etc.). An existing partial example is the West Side STEM Learning Center (SLC) [housed at George Leland Elementary School](#). The SLC serves as a regional anchor for high-quality STEM OST learning opportunities, providing free and accessible STEM learning for West Side youth and families.

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative: The Austin Community Hub would be a holistic solution that begins to address the chronic disinvestment that has plagued our community for decades. We recognize that revitalization of an entire neighborhood that has been neglected for so long cannot happen overnight, but we see schools as an important focal point for that revitalization. Recognizing schools as critical centers to our community, we would leverage a Community Hub to both bring resources and opportunities to residents, as well as create safe spaces for residents to rebuild the relationships and interconnectivity that communities must have in order to thrive.

There have been a number of policy decisions and a historic lack of investment that has contributed to the steady decline in the Austin population. As a result, Austin schools continue to lose students and funding. With this, further devastating school closures feel imminent. Even with a number of long-time high-performing schools, we struggle to keep our families from enrolling their children elsewhere as they seek out more fiscal stability, a more stable school community, or simply due to their assigned school's "bad" reputation.

A Community Hub would allow a school with low enrollment to stabilize and eventually thrive. Organizations using unutilized space could provide new and differentiated revenue sources where the proceeds go to support the school leader and their students. Parent and community engagement would become more robust as families benefit from a plethora of services and opportunities, making the school a true hub of community activity that catalyzes community growth. The Hub would slow declining enrollment and has the potential to reverse the trend as more local residents choose to stay. Over time, research shows that increased family engagement would lead to improved student outcomes. This Hub would have more permanence than the standard Community Schools Initiative where services come in and out of buildings. Instead, they as well as businesses and other resources, would coexist alongside the school. Finally, the model could become an exemplar for how CPS might manage underutilization in schools throughout the city.

What is happening today that we need to keep: Transparent information along with a process to provide our own solutions has been made available to our community for the first time in many years. As part of the QLP work, we were able to utilize the Annual Regional Analysis (ARA) to identify inequities in programming and in turn apply for an International Baccalaureate (IB) program at one of the Austin high schools. This aligned to the



Austin Community Action Council
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QLP's 'Strategy 4' for Education to boost enrollment and quality by bringing IB to the west side. Access to the same data CPS and the City have at their disposal along with the opportunity to drive our own decision making is something we hope to see more of. We are excited to have a Mayor who is willing to listen and invest in us.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days:

- Make an Austin Community Hub a priority, by pledging to support the implementation of two pilots (one based in an elementary school and one based in a high school).
- Leveraging hundreds of hours of community input and innumerable resident interviews collected through the QLP process, and only this past week, focus groups at nearly all Austin schools with more than fifty parents, look to utilize the findings to identify the leading services, resources, and opportunities for a Community Hub pilot. Identify service providers who match these needs as early tenants.
- Through a community-driven process, identify target school sites best equipped to serve as Hubs.
- Secure support from local political leaders.
- Ensure clarity on all legal, safety and facilities challenges that need to be addressed with the City's commitment to cut through "red tape" as necessary. There are 34 school-based health centers, Chicago Public Libraries within schools, leasing arrangements with outside
- organizations providing revenue to schools, and other examples that make us confident that a Hub is a viable solution with the City's support.
- Identify potential capital/other financial needs, as well as potential financing sources (e.g. TIF, Opportunity Zones, Empowerment Zones, etc.). Create an implementation financing structure that ensures fair investment into the site with respectable commitment from City.
- Leverage the Austin Quality of Life Planning Committees and the Austin Community Action Council as key stakeholders in the early governance and support for a Community Hub.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation: Long-term, the Community Hub will require a community-based governance body to ensure strong management. This should likely be a Community Based Organization accountable to community residents that would manage the "tenants" on behalf of the school and school leader. There would be a process to ensure sufficient fiscal oversight and ongoing community engagement around what services and organizations are housed within the school. Eventually, the City can scale this solution to other low-enrolled schools citywide, with an emphasis on targeting disinvested communities. The City should expect to work closely with Hubs to build the capacity of ongoing management.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative: *(1) A willingness to think across more sectors than only education:* We know our communities don't think in silos, but City agencies often do. Getting various agencies to work together to allow a Community Hub to thrive relies on the City's commitment to this concept. *(2) Community unable to identify a target site(s):* Through the QLP process, we were able to work with hundreds of constituents to narrow in on a number of important strategies and later implementation efforts (i.e. identifying Michele Clark for IB investment). We are confident that by continuing to leverage the QLP process we can navigate to a unified decision. *(3) Financial/capital costs:* Some of the early Community Hub "tenants" and solutions do not require substantial capital outlay. For example, the need for more onsite medical services for students and their families could be addressed inexpensively through already active efforts (West Side United hospitals). Many job training opportunities, other services, and even some small businesses (i.e. a We Work location) do not require substantial shifts in a school's footprint. The cost of partitions to section off students is also something CPS is accustomed to and is typically manageable. Given this concept avoids the damage caused by school closures, and will boost student outcomes and uplift a community over time, we feel any expenses for more substantial commitments to the Hub will be deemed worth it over the long run (with the expectation we would do a cost-benefit analysis prior to full commitment).

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot
From: Phyllis Glink, Executive Director, Irving Harris Foundation
Date: April 15, 2019

Initiative: *Build a trauma-informed prenatal to five comprehensive early childhood system that supports equitable outcomes for pregnant women and families with young children birth to five by building the capacity of the systems, community organizations and individuals who serve Chicago's most vulnerable through trauma training and the expansion of high-quality mental health consultation designed to eliminate suspension and expulsion of infants, toddlers and preschoolers from early care and education programs which disproportionately impacts black and brown boys and girls, address children's traumatic experiences and ACES, and strengthen and support the workforce.*

If the City of Chicago is serious about ensuring all children enter Kindergarten ready, then we must begin by guaranteeing the most vulnerable pregnant women and new families with young children birth to five have access to high-quality, authentic and comprehensive services that not only address their physical, behavioral and cognitive development but, most importantly, their mental health and well-being. Research and neuroscience are clear, during the first five years, a child's brain is at its most flexible, making this a critical period for learning and growth. Children need to responsive, supportive and high-quality connections to their parents and other adult caregivers from birth to develop optimally. However, too often, children face multiple adverse childhood experiences (ACES) that have the potential to derail their ability to succeed in school and lead to serious negative, costly outcomes over their lifespan. In fact, science tells us that children who face more than three adverse experiences in the first years of life, often related to living in poverty, are more at risk for experiencing lifelong effects from toxic stress in learning, behavior, physical and health outcomes and mental illness. According to Child Trends, children of different races and ethnicities do not experience ACES equally. Nationally, 61 percent of black non-Hispanic children and 51 percent of Hispanic children have experienced at least one ACE, compared with 40 percent of white non-Hispanic children and only 23 percent of Asian non-Hispanic children. The high levels of violence and stress in Chicago's most at-risk communities alone is creating a toxic environment for Chicago's youngest children and families not to mention multiple other adverse experiences. We know that in Illinois, 20 percent of young children have had at least two ACES, but children from more vulnerable populations have had significantly more – setting them on a much more difficult path to success.

We also see issues in early care and education settings with high rates of expulsion from child care and preschool settings. An overwhelmed and poorly trained and supported workforce coupled with implicit bias has led to large disparities in expulsion from child care and preschool programs. Overall, children birth to five are expelled from preschool programs at three times the rate of children in the K-12 system and from child care birth to five at 13 times the rate. Black and brown boys and girls are being expelled significantly more. According to Walter Gilliam from Yale University, both the 2005 and the 2014 national studies on suspension and expulsion indicated a large disparity based on gender and race in those children who were expelled or suspended from preschool programs. "Preschool boys were expelled at 4.5 times the rate of girls, and African Americans were expelled at twice the rate of their non-Black peers, with disparities in suspension even greater." Suspensions don't improve behavior and can have far-reaching consequences. Children who are suspended in preschool are [more likely to drop out of high school](#) and later to be incarcerated.

What can be done? Prevention through high-quality trauma-informed early learning and mental health services for pregnant women and children birth to five and their families provides the support children need to build a foundation for a healthy and productive future. Supportive, responsive relationships with caring adults as early in life as possible can prevent or reverse the damaging effects of toxic stress in children. We need to expand access to high-quality, developmentally oriented home visiting such as community-based doula programs and access to high-quality early learning experiences for children birth to five by braiding and blending child care, Preschool for All (PFA), Prevention Initiative (PI), Head Start and Early Head Start (HS/EHS). However, these services alone are not sufficient. While there are a number of approaches we can and should take, one key trauma-informed intervention is Mental Health Consultation (MHC). We must expand access to high-quality MHC across all child and family serving systems in the City, including public health and the early learning settings listed above to address stress families and providers are feeling that are impacting their ability to care for and nurture the children in their care. This includes targeted efforts to agencies serving immigrant families who are currently experiencing even higher levels of stress and other priority populations.

MHC is a mental health prevention service. It is focused on building adult capacity to support infant and young children's emotional development and to prevent, identify, or reduce mental health challenges. MHC includes a combination of training, reflective consultation (active listening, the exploration of the teacher's attitudes and beliefs about the situation, and problem solving) and skill building to support teachers, supervisors, directors, aides, food service and transportation staff in early learning environments so that they can support the social emotional development of young children. MHC reduces staff stress and turnover in child-serving agencies; decreases mental health symptoms in young children, reduces the educational disparities experienced by children of color;

reduces the expulsion of children from child care and early learning; increases staff competence in addressing trauma, adversity and early childhood and family mental health conditions.

The Illinois Mental Health Consultation Initiative (IMHCI), a robust public/private partnership that has included representation from CDPH and DFSS has developed and is field testing an evidence informed MHC model that is designed to be delivered across child and family serving systems. Administered by the Children's Mental Health Partnership with input from a broad stakeholder leadership group, IMHCI has already impacted systems. CDPH saw the need for this service and has trained two nurses in the model (one to train staff in the Department on early childhood mental health and one to work in the IMHCI pilot). They would like to train more if resources allowed. MHC aligned with the model that is being delivered through five Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECVH) federally funded home visiting programs including reflective practice groups. With funding from DHS Child Care, Illinois Action for Children funds six mental health consultants to provide model-aligned MHC to sites in the City. While this is a start, the amount of MHC being provided is a drop in the bucket compared to the need. Additionally, there are 600 community-based and school based early learning centers funded by CPS and DFSS to deliver early learning services including PFS, PI, HS/EHS. HS/EHS provide some funding for consultation and DFSS has encouraged consultation. Almost none are receiving MHC that conforms with the high-quality model of the IMHCI.

In the first 100 days, leaders at DFSS, CDPH and CPS should meet with leaders of the IMHCI and representatives from grantee sites to identify the best way to expand evidence-based MHC across Chicago's various child and family serving systems prioritizing the sites and agencies serving the City's most vulnerable populations who stand to benefit the most from the services. The Administratoin should develop a plan that will build off the work already underway and address funding, training and capacity, accountability, data collection and sustainability issues. Since this is a model informed by leaders from the City and has already been implemented, the new Mayor can endorse this model as critical to closing the disparities, eliminating expulsions and suspensions, and supporting a high-quality and more equitable early learning experience for Chicago's youngest children. The State legislature has recently passed a bill that prevents early childhood expulsion and suspension. The rules are currently being written but based on drafts will require preschool and child care sites to report on the availability and usage of mental health consultation as a strategy to reduce expulsions among other requirements. This is incentive to leverage and build the data and technology infrastructure assessment underway in DFSS and CPS to ensure the city is prepared to track critical metrics of program quality, aligned to ExceleRate and inclusive of suspension and expulsion data requirement and the ELC recommendations. This will ensure funds spent on early learning are targeted, effective and high-quality.

Most importantly, the new Administration should expand access to the model-aligned MHC across child and family systems to meet the needs of pregnant women, families with children birth to five, and stressed early childhood professionals. As part of the current plan for increased funding and quality requirements, the Administration should ensure all Chicago Early Learning sites funded by DFSS are required to have Mental Health Consultants who are trained and supported to implement the evidence-informed MHC model. Align DFSS investments in support services for Chicago Early Learning sites to support Mental Health Consultants through reflective practice groups and other best practices in support staff with trauma informed practices, as opposed to the monitoring role that they currently plan. This can be done through updating contracts with their early learning sites and with SGA. Also, the City could provide the required Infant-Toddler Credentialled administrator in each site that serves birth-to-three-year old children to be trained on trauma informed practice. Finally, the City should also invest in expanding MHC through CDPH so that staff who work with sites serving young children and families receive trauma informed support. To quickly get the mental health consultation workforce ready to provide evidence-informed services, the City and the Mental Health Partnership can partner to provide the MHC Common Orientation training to ensure that consultants are trained and ready to provide the model. The City could also provide funding directly to the Children's Mental Health Partnership (fiscal sponsor Lurie Children's Hospital) to expand reflective practice groups.

Providing MHC and trauma training will provide significant support to early learning providers and make a transformational difference in the quality of classroom teaching and children's outcomes – including explicitly addressing bias to help overcome disparities. To achieve MHC at scale will require increased funding for MHC and other trauma supports over time including attention to a pipeline of consultants. The IMHCI is being done statewide so the City can work with state partners to lift this up as important and secure increased funding for core statewide infrastructure and workforce to supervise this work over time. Overtime, however, other structural changes to the early learning system – including increasing teacher compensation, incentivizing program quality and parent engagement will need to be addressed if the City hopes to provide children and families from birth with the developmental and learning experiences children need to succeed. This requires an integrated, cross-system governance and coordination structure to oversee all early learning and home visiting supports for families. The City should reactivate the Mayor's Early Learning Executive Council and have that Council work closely with the Governor's Early Learning Council – holding best practices related to early learning systems, delivery of integrated, comprehensive services that include MHC across the City.



LEAP Innovations - Summary for the Education Transition Committee

Name: Phyllis Lockett, Chief Executive Officer

Transition Committee: Education

Objective: Ensure all students in CPS have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed

Potential Initiative: Unite and ignite Chicago's learning ecosystem – schools and educators, afterschool/community-based programs, health-care providers, the business, nonprofit, and philanthropic communities, among others – to create a personalized learning pathway for every child, tailored to his or her academic and social-emotional needs, strengths, and contexts.

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative: Chicago's education community, driven by strong civic and philanthropic support, has made great strides in improving education in our city, taking what was once labeled the worst district in the country to one in which students are among the fastest-growing academically in the U.S. We've built a stronger accountability system, fostered much-needed principal autonomy, adopted a sensible student-based budgeting system, and introduced school choice in neighborhoods of high need. As a result, test scores are rising, and more students are graduating high school and enrolling in college.

These efforts reflect solid and evidence-based reforms. **But to close persistent achievement gaps, address issues of equity, and ensure that Chicago high school graduates are truly prepared for college and career, we must move beyond reforming, and focus on transforming.** It's predicted that just 19 percent of 2017's CPS ninth-graders will go on to earn a bachelor's degree in 10 years. Meanwhile, the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness projected that by 2020 we will have a shortage of 1.5 million college graduates nationwide to meet the demands of employers.

LEAP Innovations was founded on the belief that all children, regardless of race, cultural background or socio-economic status, have unlimited potential and a right to a high-quality education. And we know that for every child to succeed in tomorrow's unknown world, we need to move beyond an education model built to prepare them for yesterday's jobs. **To achieve true equity, we can't stop at providing each student with a high-quality school.** We must prepare each and every student with the confidence, knowledge, skills, and agency they'll need to succeed and thrive in the future, including foundational experiences in: complex problem solving; critical thinking; emotional intelligence and demonstrating empathy; team collaboration; and a data-informed orientation. To access these skills, students must have a range of opportunities – remediation and enrichment, work experience and internships, and perhaps most importantly, mentors and other guiding adults. Students of color, and students of high need, often don't have the social capital to access these networks. Instead, we need to make these connections in deliberate ways so all students can benefit from the learning that accompanies each experience.

Our organization, prominent local and national foundations, leading educators across the country, and now more than 140 schools across Chicagoland have recognized that a one-size-fits-all education system isn't working. **By championing the adoption of personalized learning in our city's schools, as well as fostering a connected ecosystem of learning to support personalized pathways, the new administration can help drive a true transformation of education in Chicago, and create a new construct that is truly centered around the learner.**

What is happening today that we need to keep: Due to recent reforms, many key anchors of the connected learning ecosystem are already in place. The district must continue to develop and expand principal autonomy, as well as programs that create access to out-of-school learning and internships, including: Career and Technical Education, Dual Credit and Dual Enrollment, Early College STEM, and access to AP credits. We must continue to champion Chicago City of Learning, which provides networked access to out-of-school, connected learning experiences. We must also continue to champion innovation, from Illinois' competency-based learning pilot, to programs where educators and school leaders work together to design and pilot personalized learning models specific to their communities and contexts, with the integration of supportive edtech tools.

Strengthening, scaling, and connecting these programs will provide a firm foundation for a true learning ecosystem, one in which personalized pathways and equitable access for every student can be created. At LEAP, **our vision for the future of education is outlined in our framework for personalized learning.** Synthesizing findings from across neuroscience, learning science, instructional improvement, and the world of work into a tangible, actionable vision for schools, it bridges the gap between the theory and practice of learner-centered instruction.

The framework is anchored in four core components. First, we believe that learning must be **1) focused on the learner**, with experiences that are relevant, contextualized and designed around a deep understanding of individual academic and nonacademic needs, interests and strengths in order to develop the whole child. We believe that learning must be **2) demonstrated by the learner** – that learners should progress at their own pace and advance based on demonstrated competency, not time spent on a

subject. We believe that learning should be **3) led by the learner**, with learners coached to take ownership of their learning so that it serves their curiosities, goals, and skill needs. And finally, we believe that **4) learning must be connected** – to a student's identity, their culture and context, as well as to real-world learning experiences like internships and dual credit to better prepare them for the future.

Our core levers for change include developing teachers and school leaders who are driving the future of learning; re-designing learning models; cultivating new tools and innovations; and engaging in research and thought leadership. In five years, we have built Chicago into the largest urban demonstration site of personalized learning in the country. In the process, we've impacted nearly 40,000 students, 90 percent of whom are children of color, and more than 80 percent of whom are eligible for free or reduced lunch. We've also helped more than 2,400 teachers and pre-service educators evolve their practice to personalized learning, and worked with more than 140 schools (86% CPS district and charter schools) across Chicagoland. We need to continue this momentum by expanding the CPS Elevate program to give more schools across the city the opportunity to design and adopt a transformative, whole-school personalized learning model.

Students in each of the first three cohorts (2014-17) of LEAP's flagship program, the LEAP Pilot Network, saw statistically significant improvement in literacy, surpassing expected reading growth and out-performing their peers in comparison groups on that portion of the national Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) assessment. Additionally, for four consecutive years, 90+ percent of teachers stated that personalized learning increased student engagement.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days: In the next 100 days, we must sharpen our focus on educator training and supports. To drive a new learning ecosystem, teachers and school leaders will need to lead the charge, and to do so will require dedicated professional learning, coaching support, a cohort of fellow school teams with which to collaborate and problem-solve, and access to exemplar models from which to learn. Based on our early findings, this approach is driving substantive improvements: for four consecutive years, 99 percent of teachers stated that LEAP's model of personalized learning has improved their practice.

As an ecosystem, we must develop an effective and sustainable strategy for scaling personalized learning supports to more practicing educators, as well as develop deliberate collaborations to infuse personalized learning into Chicago's top teacher preparation programs. In the next hundred days, we need to catalyze the major schools of education who are supplying educators into CPS. We must train another 700-800 pre-service teachers on personalized learning, finish preparing 250 educators to pilot whole-child, personalized teaching and learning strategies in their classrooms this coming fall, and complete support for 42 school teams piloting personalized learning this school year. Additionally, we must cultivate a citywide community of practice for schools to learn from each other, pilot innovations, and get access to national personalized learning exemplars. One opportunity for educators to learn from one another will be at LEAP's annual InnovatED Summit, which galvanizes educators across the city to get access to innovative teaching and learning strategies.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation: To realize a personalized experience for every learner, we must in the longer-term activate eight levers of transformation:

- **Parents and community** – engage parents and community members in designing this new learning ecosystem and elevate their voices
- **School transformation** - the design and implementation of whole-school models that support personalized learning
- **Next-generation workforce** - support for current educators to adopt personalized learning, as well as strategies to incorporate personalized learning into teacher preparation programs
- **Edtech tools** - innovative solutions that support teachers in providing differentiated content, accessing real-time data, and supporting student choice
- **Tech infrastructure** - to enable safe and efficient access to learning technologies, student data, communication platforms, etc.
- **R&D and analytics infrastructure** – structures to support understanding and scaling of the tools and practices that create the most impact within different contexts
- **Expanded learning network of providers** - the "out-of-school" component of each student's personalized pathway, allowing students access to activities that relate directly to their interests, impact their communities, earn additional credit, and expose career opportunities
- **Policy and sustainable funding** - provide resources to support development of the ecosystem and eliminate barriers to full implementation

As an organization, we are currently in the process of developing a five-year strategy to activate these levers. Some levers LEAP will impact directly. To drive others, we will build partnerships and advocate for conditions in which the ecosystem can grow.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative: There are many potential challenges in driving a systematic city-wide initiative. At the highest level, we will need support in identifying and driving policy changes to promote a student-centered system, including policies that enable true competency-based progression. Additionally, many of the levers outlined above, as well as driving coherence of the overall ecosystem, will require significant investment. An estimate of these costs will be an output of our aforementioned five-year strategy plan. Finally, we'll need to focus deliberately on change management and the collaboration required among educators and other learning providers to create the infrastructure and connections for personalized learning pathways to become a reality.



MEMO

Name: Paul Sznewajs, Executive Director, Ingenuity

Transition Committee: Education

Prompt: Please pick one objective to focus your memo on from among the objectives that were shared with you on your invitation letter: *Ensure all students in CPS have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed.*

A potential initiative (one sentence):

Bring equity and make CPS the most creative school district in the nation by ensuring every child, in every grade, in every CPS school has access to the arts as part of their ongoing education—with a focus on closing the gap for the one-third (105,000) of CPS students who do not receive regular access to the arts.

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:

Ingenuity shares Mayor-elect Lightfoot and CPS' visions for a public school system that provides equal opportunities for all students, and that is inclusive, supportive, and responsive to the needs of our city's children, particularly those who are most at risk. The Lightfoot administration's values are strongly aligned with and central to our initiative: **equity** – providing access to quality arts programs for all CPS students; **transparency** – making data-driven decisions and sharing information broadly; **accountability** – publicly measuring our collective progress against stated goals; **diversity and inclusion** – ensuring that our efforts incorporate, represent and benefit the multitude of stakeholders in CPS arts education; and **transformation** – leveraging public-private partnerships to transform the complex and multi-faceted CPS system.

Ingenuity engaged more than 2,000 CPS students, parents, teachers, principals, city, philanthropy, and cultural leadership to ensure CPS is a national leader in arts access, quality and equity for students. Based on their feedback, a collective community effort over the past six years has led to a sea change in arts education across Chicago's schools. Access to high-quality arts programming has risen 117% over the past six years (from 29% to 63%), with two-thirds (250,000) of CPS students now attending a school that is strong or excelling in the arts. These data are collected and analyzed annually and shared publicly via through Ingenuity's *artlook* data-mapping platform, and our annual *State of the Arts in Chicago Public Schools* report. These cumulative successes are impacting the intellectual, creative, and interpersonal development of hundreds of thousands of CPS students.

While we celebrate this great progress, work still remains. 84% of CPS students are Black or Latinx, and 77% come from economically-disadvantaged households; data reveal that one-third (105,000) of CPS students lack consistent access to robust in-school arts programming. In alignment with the District's five-year vision and Mayor-elect Lightfoot's goals for ensuring a world-class education system for all CPS students, we have identified the following areas of focus to "Close the Arts Opportunity Gap":

- **Support and fortify our teacher pipeline:** Retain and elevate the accomplishments of high-quality arts teachers in the district, and – in partnership with CPS, Ingenuity, Arts Alliance Illinois, and local higher education institutions – develop a teacher pipeline for the arts, addressing teacher shortages in high-needs opportunity schools.

- **Provide resources for arts education programs in schools by increasing** Arts Essentials funds at CPS (currently \$1,000 per year for each school that provides data on its arts education programming and infrastructure); supports for Fine and Performing Arts schools; and competitive grants through the Creative Schools Fund.
- **Engage Communities:** Using annual data, engage Aldermen in developing ward-specific plans that enhance, increase, and sustain access and equity to quality arts programs and public arts initiatives in schools.
- **Expand college & career pathways for high school students**, and, by extension, economic opportunities for teaching artists and members of the creative industries, by engaging higher education leadership.
- **Increase the capacity of our school leaders and LSC's:** Elevate the knowledge and skill sets of principals and LSC members that support the prioritization of high-quality, school-day arts education for all CPS students through professional development, peer-to-peer collaboration with leaders of exemplar schools in the arts, and through the observation of CPS demonstration sites across the district.

And as it pertains to this initiative:

- What is happening today that we need to keep?

Continue to pursue the vision and goals set forth in the CPS Arts Education Plan through:

- Finishing the job and ensuring arts learning for the 105,000 CPS without access
- Driving change and innovation through classroom-level partnerships with cultural agencies
- Supporting the current funding strategies that bring critical resources to teacher-designed arts programs

By maintaining this approach, we will continue to make gains in our schools and ensure that every child, in every school, in every grade has access to the arts as part of a well-rounded education.

- **What we need to implement in the next 100 days**

- Capitalize on the alignment and momentum behind the District's and Dr. Jackson's five-year vision for equity in schools—including in the arts.
- Mayor-elect Lightfoot was the only candidate to issue a cultural platform, along with publicly championing the importance of arts in schools. We must ensure Mayor-elect Lightfoot's Education and Arts & Cultural first-term strategies meaningfully intersect with each other from the beginning.

- **What we can plan for longer-term implementation**

- Include the arts in the District's school accountability system (School Quality Rating Policy, and On Track metrics), paralleling state ESSA policy.

- **What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative**

While substantial progress has been made in arts education in CPS in recent years, there are still more than 100,000 students who do not have consistent access to robust arts education. These gaps are predominantly in high-needs communities on the South and West sides of the city.

Analyses of CPS arts education data are informing specific strategies to drive systemic change:

- **Scheduling:** while many school leaders prioritize the arts, data confirm that scheduling the recommended minimum of 120 minutes of weekly arts instruction is an identified challenge.
- **Staffing:** the District has identified the arts as one of the curricular areas facing teacher shortages.
- **Resources:** current EBF funding limits principals' ability to hire the adequate amount of staff or provide the necessary equipment and supplies to successfully implement high-quality arts instruction.

Education Memo

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Ruth Kimble

- **An Early Childhood potential initiative:**

Invest in Early Childhood Community Learning Cohort pilot in two neighborhoods to increase the number of early childhood educators in underserved communities that have infant/toddler credentials or bachelor degrees.

- **How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative?**

The cumulative early childhood research suggests that (during the first three years of a child's life) it is critical to the healthy development of Chicago's youngest and most impoverished residents, that they receive early learning experiences in high quality environments. We also know that children who are living in poverty continue to need rich and appropriate opportunities from three to age five.

In the city of Chicago, approximately 179,286 children are under the age of 5 and more than 25% are living in poverty. Chicago Public Schools' report for the 2018-2019 school year that 89.3% of students enrolled in kindergarten are minority students. Chicago's population continues to change and become more diverse – social-economically, ethnically, racially, linguistically, religiously and family household demographics. Currently, less than 40% of families are able to access any of the early learning programs and the lack of additional funding creates a scarcity of: trained teachers, appropriate facilities, materials and ancillary staff.

There are programs available for families of children under the age of 5, including Chicago's Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten programs, childcare and Child Parent Centers (CPC) programs. All of these programs require a minimum of two highly trained and certified educators in each classroom.

There is a current shortage of credentialed early childhood educators and a pool of educators that reflect the breath of Chicago's diversity. Many early childhood providers work 10 – 12 hours a day and work for \$10 - \$12 an hour. It is challenging for early childhood providers to find time after working long days to continue their education.

We propose the city of Chicago; create a partnership between City Colleges and community based organizations (CBOs) to develop a network of community-based, early childhood hubs that could support early childhood cohorts. The hubs would ensure access, convenience and increased diversity in the educators serving the most disenfranchised neighborhoods.

- **What is happening today that we need to keep?**

We need to keep the mixed delivery system of early care and education.

- **What we need to implement in the next 100 days?**

- Propose legislation to provide funding to develop a pilot hub for this fall.
- Selection of City Colleges.
- Develop a RFP process for CBOs to apply to be early childhood pilot hubs.
- Recruitment of participants for early childhood cohort
- Develop a tutoring program to ensure cohort members are prepared to complete their degree requirements

- **What we can plan for longer-term implementation?**

- Full roll out of community hubs across the city beginning with the most impoverished neighborhoods.

- **What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative?**

- The identification of community based organizations that have a relationship with a City College
- Sufficient funding to support the Early Learning Community hub and the cohort members.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Robin Melvin, Chair, MENTOR Illinois

RE: A Mentor-Rich Chicago – Igniting a Mentoring Movement

DATE: April 15, 2019

Executive Summary

MENTOR Illinois is committed to the educational objectives of Mayor-elect Lightfoot and proposes a deeper emphasis on youth mentoring as a research-proven intervention to enhance student success in school and beyond. Community-based organizations that leverage the power of mentoring to strengthen youth outcomes are vital CPS partners and supports to achieve the 2nd objective: **Ensure all students in CPS have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed.**

In today's global economy, high school graduation is an economic imperative, and college graduation or post-secondary training is critical to workforce viability. Data reveals **too many of Chicago's youth are poorly prepared to enter and succeed in the 21st century workforce**. Chicago Public Schools reported in October 2015 that 66.3% of students who started high school in 2009 graduated by the summer of 2014, well below the national average of 82.3%. This statistic grows more acute for Black and Latino students, particularly males. College graduation is far more elusive, with a mere 14% of CPS 9th graders likely to earn a bachelor's degree by their mid-twenties. For black males, it's an alarming 6% (UChicago CCSR Research Brief on CPS, Dec 2014).

Mentoring is a powerful tool to address this crisis. Research documents that mentoring done well is associated with such outcomes as substantial reductions in truancy, substance abuse, and youth violence (Kennelly & Monrad, 2007), and is positively associated with strengthening connections to school, including increasing participation in extracurricular activities, serving in a leadership role in those activities, and pursuing and completing a college education (Civic Enterprises & Hart Research Assoc., 2014).

Mentoring can also bridge the cultural divide as mentoring between dissimilar individuals broadens narrow perspectives for both mentors and youth. It exposes young people to a world that seems impossible to imagine, and it rewrites stereotypes for adults who have become fearful and hardened. Through human-to-human connections, mentoring can help the city heal after years of racial tensions. It can help young people feel that the city is FOR them. It can help them envision a path, dream a dream, where they, too, are living a productive, safe life in a productive, safe city. It can help adults become advocates for the city's youth, where they are working side by side to help young people achieve to their fullest potential. Ultimately, quality mentoring can develop a diverse pipeline of well-prepared CPS graduates who can feed into the City's workforce.

What is happening today that we need to keep:

We recommend that Mayor-elect Lightfoot maintain the focus and level of funding that the current administration has committed for growing the number of youth in transformational mentoring programs.

Recent years have seen a meaningful increase in the number of youth mentoring programs in Chicago. While some are school-based programs (ex: BAM/WOW, Chicago Scholars, iMENTOR, and WITS) others are community/site-based (Big Brothers Big Sisters, MetroSquash and YAP – Youth Advocate Programs) or business-based (JPMorgan Chase's TFI - The Fellowship Initiative, and Exelon's Stay In School initiative). In each program, strong mentoring relationships result in youth who have broader access and exposure to enriching opportunities and individualized guidance on myriad areas of healthy development.

Although funding cuts in 2015 shuttered CPS' in-house mentoring program for elementary-aged students, Mayor Emanuel's 2nd term included a strong support and funding for mentoring for boys & young men of color in CPS grades 7 – 10 through the Mayor's Mentoring Initiative, an effort of the Department of Family and Support Services.

Across Chicago, our surveys of youth mentoring programs indicate that 25,000 school-age kids are in formal mentoring relationships.

What we need to implement immediately, or within the next year:

We recommend that Mayor-elect Lightfoot embed youth mentoring into the fabric of the City of Chicago and CPS strategic plans as a key area of focus. Every City agency – including the Office of the Mayor – should commit to mentoring CPS students and funds should be allocated for CPS to rebuild and expand its in-house mentoring program for elementary-aged students.

Fewer than 1 in 10 low-income CPS youth have a formal mentor. Asking each City Department to provide release time and support for employees to mentor CPS students will send a powerful message regarding the Mayor-elect's commitment to mentoring. Embedding mentoring at CPS will allow for one-stop mentoring services – it's where the kids are – and will centralize screening, training and support for volunteers.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation:

Chicago can be a **mentor-rich city** – where every young person who wants or needs a mentor has access to one who is screened, trained and supported to ensure the best outcomes for youth. Every organization in Chicago that has an employee-base, membership-base or congregation-base can be mobilized en-masse to support the young people of Chicago en-masse through quality mentoring programs. **Chicago can ignite a mentoring movement that will engage all citizens in supporting the City's youth through mentoring.**

In order to do this an infrastructure, with broad community engagement, must be in place to expand the capacity of current programs to support additional young people and mentors; recruit volunteers from workplace organizations; match workplace volunteers with CPS and other community-based mentoring programs; ensure all programs are adhering to quality program practices; and ensure accountability by measuring the progress of the movement through tracking key student outcomes.

thrivechicago

Name: Sandra Abrevaya, Thrive Chicago (Thrive)

Transition Committee: Education

Prompt: Increase postsecondary success so all who want to can live in and thrive in Chicago

Potential Initiative

Thrive and its 50 partners (listed below) that are part of our citywide Postsecondary Action Team are not leaving college to chance--we are working together with Chicago Public Schools (CPS), City Colleges of Chicago, and other higher education institutions to help more young people get their college degree by identifying best practices across the system and scaling those that work--including better coordination among the various organizations that serve youth so we can put students at the center.

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative

Thrive estimates we spend \$2 billion annually on nonprofit programs and services for Chicago's youth. Thrive has also assessed that the \$2 billion investment only allows us to provide these programs to 15-30% of Chicago's youth. Some of Chicago's youth get to participate in multiple programs, while roughly 70% of youth don't get to participate in any programs.

In order to increase postsecondary success for all Chicago youth, we need to:

1. Ensure the existing services reach more youth and reach them effectively. We can do this by scaling best practices, strengthening the coordination between nonprofits and CPS, and establishing shared accountability for ultimate student outcomes at the school level; and
2. Ensure we serve more African American and Latino males who are currently not receiving as many program opportunities by elevating these equity gaps and designing strategies to end them.

What is happening today that we need to keep

We need to keep working as a collaboration of public and private partners--including key city agency leaders such as CPS--on solving these bigger challenges together.

In 2017, the collaborative work of the Postsecondary Action Team contributed to the [highest ever one year increase in college enrollment](#) in Chicago, which resulted in an additional 1,000 students successfully matriculating to college. The Chicago summer melt rate, a key contributing factor to low enrollment rates, had stagnated at 5,000 young people per year--CPS graduates who intended to go to college but never enrolled due to summer barriers--for three years in a row. With catalytic funding from the Chicago Community Trust and the Joyce Foundation, the Thrive Postsecondary Action Team identified local and national best practices to tackle this challenge with a wide range of partners. The strategy that emerged involved targeting 55 of the high schools with the highest rates of summer melt, and staffing them with summer transition coordinators and youth ambassadors.

In 2018, the number of cross-sector partners expanded to include:

- 27 nonprofit organizations: Ada S. McKinley, After School Matters, Alternative Schools Network, Bottom Line, Brighton Park Neighborhood Council, Center for College Access and Success, Chicago College Advising Corps, Chicago Scholars, College Possible, Communities In Schools of Chicago, Embarc,

Enlace, Gary Comer Youth Center, Genesys Works, High Jump, iMentor, Mind + Hand, OneGoal, Partnership for College Completion, Pass With Flying Colors, Skills for Chicagoland's Future, The Academy Group, Umoja, Urban Initiatives, Year Up, Youth Guidance, and Youth Job Center.

- 12 Illinois higher education institutions: Arrupe College, City Colleges of Chicago, DePaul University, Dominican University, National Louis University, North Park University, Northeastern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, Robert Morris University, Roosevelt University, University of Illinois at Chicago, and University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Other critical stakeholders: Chicago Public Schools' Office of School Counseling and Postsecondary Advising, including district leaders and college and career network specialists; Intrinsic Schools; MB Financial Bank; Noble Network; Rush University Medical Center; UChicago Urban Education Institute; UChicago Urban Labs.

In 2018, the collaborative strategies expanded to include:

- Increasing targeted schools from 55 to 87. In addition to staffing these schools with summer transition coordinators and youth ambassadors, the 2018 strategy involved launching stronger coordination between all the nonprofits and school leaders involved in the young people's lives. This school-nonprofit coordination strategy was focused most intensively at 9 high-need schools: Austin CCA (Austin), North-Grand (Humboldt Park), Orr (Humboldt Park), Collins (North Lawndale), Marshall (East Garfield Park), Manley (North Lawndale), Spry (South Lawndale), CVCA (Avalon Park), and Bowen (South Chicago).

For a second year in a row, we saw collective success and across the district, college enrollment increased by another approximately 300 students.

In 2019, this collaborative work will receive an additional boost from the My Brother's Keeper Alliance Impact grant from the Obama Foundation awarded to Thrive and Youth Guidance to do more as a system to support boys and young men of color's transition to college, including Becoming A Man alumni.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days:

The Postsecondary Action Team has incredible momentum and is solving big systemic problems as a collective. Within the next 100 days, the Lightfoot Administration should find a way to communicate that it will back the efforts of this collective coalition of public and private partners and their design of solutions.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation:

The \$2 billion we invest in nonprofits can serve many more students if we work more intentionally on coordination among the supports within a school building. There is an opportunity for the City to make a commitment of resources and focus to drive that type of coordination at a citywide level and the Postsecondary Action Team is a strong partner for this work.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative:

In addition to the resourcing of direct services, we need to acknowledge the additional resources school leaders will need to prioritize this work as well as the need for a citywide coordinating entity to engage.

thrivechicago

Name: Sandra Abrevaya, Thrive Chicago (Thrive)

Transition Committee: Education

Prompt: Ensure that all students in CPS have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed

Potential initiative: Expand the Community Schools model into more neighborhood schools

Note: In this memo, we redefine “Community Schools” as “Community Hubs” to be inclusive of services for the whole child and family development and to allow for a more permanent and cost-effective co-location of programs and services. While there are many nonprofits working in school buildings, we need more dedicated capacity to manage partners, ensure that students are connected to the right multi-sector supports including trauma-informed care and career pathway services, and identify what supports are lacking. Together with our partners, our vision is for more Community Hubs across Chicago Public Schools (CPS) that give students and families 1) coordinated supports; 2) convenient access to wrap-around supports they need to grow academically, socially, and emotionally; and 3) leverages under-enrolled school buildings by bringing in service providers.

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative

Led by a diverse group of 30+ education and neighborhood leaders across the South and West Sides (listed on page 2), Community Hubs represent a widely held commitment to community-driven solutions to inequities in Chicago’s education ecosystem. Community Hubs are about transforming how a school serves its community and how parents, schools and their partners coordinate to ensure that every student’s needs are met.

Together with the Lightfoot Administration, we need to:

1. Ensure that every student in Chicago has the opportunity to thrive in a world-class learning environment *in their neighborhood*.
2. Increase coordination and resources at these schools to make sure that *all* students are connected to the right supports to remove any barriers to and accelerate their learning.

What is happening today that we need to keep

Thrive and its partners across several neighborhoods have already successfully built Reconnection Hubs for disconnected youth (16-24 year olds who are out of work and out of school), an effort that should continue to scale. The first Hub - the Roseland Reconnection Hub - launched in 2018 and is jointly funded by DFSS and private philanthropy to test the model of coordinating currently fragmented services for disconnected youth. A new Hub is on-track to launch in Little Village with a wide range of local partners. The idea of a Reconnection Hub as a way to address Chicago’s 50,000 disconnected youth was generated by youth and community leaders as part of Thrive’s Opportunity Youth Working Group, which developed 10 citywide recommendations. This innovative approach is driving down the number of disconnected youth in Chicago by making it easier for young people who are not in any system to navigate everything from homelessness supports to mental health supports to employment and education supports. When we improve the way in which existing organizations in our neighborhoods work together on behalf of youth, we can have a greater impact and also make our dollars go further.

The multi-neighborhood effort to build Community Hubs for youth who are currently *in* school has emerged as another ground-up solution on the South and West Sides and should be a continued priority in the Lightfoot Administration. These Community Hubs seek to address two challenges:

1. Today, many students and their families across the South and West Sides have to navigate an often siloed ecosystem of community partners to be connected to comprehensive academic enrichment, trauma care, social-emotional learning, health, and other supports they need to thrive in school.

2. Many schools on Chicago's South and West Sides are underutilized and face declining enrollment, leading to a lack of funding required to offer a range of supports their students need to succeed.

A Community Hub would bring multiple supports together in a school building, especially leveraging underutilized space in several under-enrolled CPS schools, to ensure that schools and their community partners are seamlessly coordinated in identifying student needs, delivering necessary supports, and tracking impact. This initiative is already underway in two separate but complementary efforts that Thrive is supporting and would like the Lightfoot Administration to hold as exemplar models: the West Side United (WSU) Education Steering Committee and the South Side Education Alliance (SSEA) -- a pilot of the World Class Schools initiative.¹

The *WSU Education Steering Committee*², which Thrive is supporting with WSU, Civic Consulting Alliance, and Kids First Chicago, launched in January 2019 to help community partners develop and incubate innovative education strategies, building on neighborhood quality of life plans. The WSU Steering Committee has begun to identify potential Community Hub locations and identified Austin, North Lawndale, and East / West Garfield Park as priority communities. The next step is to identify candidate schools with input from community leaders, neighborhood collective impact organizations, and district and local CPS leadership.

The *South Side Education Alliance*, led by The Chicago Public Education Fund, Stand for Children, and Thrive, kicked off in August 2018 to develop strategies to improve school outcomes on the South Side, through which a similar idea of Community Hubs emerged. This effort is being explored in the following South Side schools: Ashe, Beethoven, Bouchet, Fiske, Burke, O'Keefe, Powell, and Washington. The next step is to engage community partners across the South Side to join and scale this effort.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days

Within the next 100 days, the City should:

- Leverage Thrive and partners' existing framework and engagement on this effort;
- Prioritize this effort with the appropriate CPS departments and the DFSS youth division (e.g. legal, facilities, etc.);
- Announce the Lightfoot Administration's partnership with youth and neighborhood leaders to launch Community Hubs across the South and West Sides.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation

In order to achieve long-term sustainability, the City can amplify these critical efforts and ensure all CPS students have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed by:

- Conducting a fiscal scan of city expenses across multiple city departments that can be better streamlined and allocated to Community Hubs;
- Committing the Mayor's education team to be a leading partner in identifying the most crucial players for each Community Hub to ensure a successful launch and long-term sustainability;
- Partnering with Thrive to identify funding from diverse sources such as the civic and employer community.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative

The sustainability of these Hubs is paramount and while the pilots will demonstrate how to leverage multi-sector resources (e.g. third-party payers for health clinics), scaling these Hubs will eventually require policy changes at the local and state level to allocate public dollars for this model.

¹ The *World Class Schools* initiative was launched in June 2018 in partnership with nonprofit organizations that span child development and education. *Partners:* The Chicago Public Education Fund, Thrive, Danielson Group, Kids First Chicago, Stand for Children, LEAP Innovations, Teach for America, Educators for Excellence, and A Better Chicago

² *Partners:* West Side United, Thrive, Civic Consulting Alliance, Kids First Chicago, Rush University Medical Center, University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences System, Cook County Health, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, Sinai Health System, Chicago Public Schools, Illinois Medical District, Amita Health, Project Exploration, Crane Medical Preparatory High School, Legal Prep Charter Academy, Academy of Scholastic Achievement, Project Exploration, and West Side residents.



Early Childhood: Deepened commitment to quality experiences beginning prenatally

Mayor-elect Lightfoot Education Transition Committee

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

From: Sandy De León, Ounce of Prevention Fund

Potential Initiative:

A coordinated, community-embedded and family-centric prenatal and post-partum investment that ensures two critical points of engagement: 1) the launch of nurse home visits available to all babies and parents immediately following birth (using the program model Family Connects International-FCI), linked to a network of coordinated community supports; enhanced by 2) the expansion of prenatal, labor and delivery and post-partum doula services for families who face the greatest barriers, embedded in evidence-based home visiting programs as well as within health clinics and birth hospitals.

Early childhood does not begin with the single entry point of preschool. Approximately 38,000 babies are delivered each year across Chicago's 19 birthing hospitals and we know there is both a great need and potential to improve the outcomes for these babies and their families by deepening the city's commitment to early experiences beginning prenatally. Specifically, the city can support efforts to offer all parents of newborn babies the opportunity for a visit in their home from a nurse, through FCI. FCI includes the following components: a full assessment of each families' well-being and needs in the vulnerable weeks following the birth of a baby, connections to family-identified supports, as well as strengthening the alignment of community supports - to identify, build capacity, coordinate services, as well as improve communication and coordination across the many systems serving families.

FCI implementation studies indicate that as many as 96% of all new families express a need for supportive services after the birth of their child. We also know that the first weeks of new parenting is a *critical time* for identifying health risks and vulnerabilities for both the newborn and parents. In Illinois, there is no comprehensive or standardized way to ensure that all families know about and can find needed supports. The universal offer of a visit in the family's home by a nurse during this early postpartum period will ensure that there is an *entry point for all families*. Offering a visit to all families in a community reduces stigma associated with targeting high-risk populations, generates larger-scale outcomes and supports community-level change by connecting every family to the community. It is not duplicative of other programs but builds on existing networks of services. Additionally, it redefines outcomes from simply being anchored in child and family development/well-being to the population level change brought about by a public health approach. Community-wide linkages begin at the birthing hospital, are identified and supported during home visits, and reside in the fabric of the community's systems of care.

In addition to the opportunity for this universal touch post-partum, it is also critical to reach families who face greater challenges with necessary supports as early as possible in pregnancy through expansion of doula services embedded in evidence-based home visiting programs, and in birthing hospitals and health clinics. Evidence shows that doula services during pregnancy, labor and delivery and postpartum decreases preterm births, low birth-weight babies and improved outcomes for women in labor. Working with a home visitor, doulas help parents create birth plans, provide support and advocacy during and after delivery, and connect families to prenatal care and a medical home. These kinds of critical touchpoints prenatally and immediately following birth should be considered as part of any early childhood education initiative, including the Lightfoot Early Education Zones proposal.

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative:

The Administration can infuse said values by first ensuring that the initiative remains embedded in the community, as proposed. Accountability for inclusion and responsiveness to community should be part of the planning and implementation process and can begin by assessing what voices and perspectives are represented in the design of any competitive process and ensuring that dissemination of any grant opportunity is widely distributed. Recruitment of hospitals should begin with those who serve majority Chicago residents, primarily communities of color where there are increased rates of infant and maternal mortality – particularly for Black women – and other adverse outcomes for young children. Hospitals who are part of broader community networks and collaboratives (e.g. West Side United) should also be prioritized. The approach should be one of targeted universalism, with the understanding that improved outcomes for communities and groups who have been historically disadvantaged and denied access



Early Childhood: Deepened commitment to quality experiences beginning prenatally

Mayor-elect Lightfoot Education Transition Committee

to quality care improves outcomes for the population at large. In building the workforce for doulas and nurses providing universal newborn support home visits, the city should work with partner training agencies and higher education institutions to ensure local recruitment, career opportunities and widened career pathways within the community to increase the number of staff reflective of the racial/ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of those they serve. Additionally, a citywide body led by Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH), informed by a robust set of regional Community Alignment Boards (CABs), with further engagement and input from a cross-sector citywide body like the Early Learning Executive Council (ELEC) provides an oversight structure to better (1) ensure that the intervention both aligns with these core values and (2) support opportunities for continuous quality improvement.

As it pertains to this initiative- What is happening today that the Administration needs to keep:

The city Administration should preserve its long history of mixed delivery system of quality services available prenatally through kindergarten entry, that allows for authentic parent choice of PreK enrollment in either a school- or community-based organization, and continue investment in early childhood workforce pathways that are affordable, accessible, flexible and clear so that all candidates, including “non-traditional” students, are assured entry. Specifically within the prenatal to age three domain, the city should maintain its long-standing leadership in improving quality services for infant-toddler center-based programs. In addition, the Administration should prioritize work underway at CDPH to launch the pilot of universal perinatal nurse visits in the home and a coordinated perinatal supports system, which has already been informed by listening sessions completed with a range of stakeholders across the city. The Administration should also support efforts to operationalize the recently approved City Ordinance “to address both the city's need and the ability to mitigate disparities in maternal mortality within the City of Chicago”, which specifically calls on the Department of Family Support Services (DFSS) and the Department of Public Health to lead the effort.

What needs to be implemented in the next 100 days:

Within the first 100 days, the Administration should meet with CDPH, community agencies, advocate partners and stakeholders to review the existing plan to launch the universal newborn support nurse visit pilots. The Administration should prioritize the selection of pilot communities, recruitment of partner hospitals to participate in pilot, and design of a community alignment structure (including development of a competitive process for community-based organizations to locally administer community alignment boards). It should also ensure there is formal coordination across CDPH and DFSS and a body charged with improving birth outcomes and reducing infant and maternal mortality rates, since this initiative cuts across maternal and infant health, human services, and early learning and ensures engagement of families prenatally and/or immediately following birth. The formal body convened by both city agencies should also explore the development of a public campaign raising awareness of infant and maternal mortality issues and prevalence, as well as prevention and intervention services available, convene open spaces where dialogue can take place and families share ongoing experiences to further inform system improvements, and engage the Mayor's Early Learning Executive Council (ELEC) as a key partner in this work.

What can Administration plan for longer-term implementation & what challenges might be encountered in executing initiative:

Planning for evaluation should be embedded at the onset of the process and be designed to track outcomes over time. An evaluation will help the city better understand in what ways a more coordinated and universal approach can influence maternal, child and family outcomes. This work should involve an implementation study to inform scaling as well as an outcomes evaluation to measure impact. This evaluation cannot be viewed as a stand-alone study of one intervention – rather, the Administration must view this intervention within the full context of the prenatal to five system and undertake a more comprehensive assessment of the full system in order to truly understand the degree of cohesiveness, duplication, and inconsistency which may exist in the system's foundational elements. An understanding of where improvements, realignment and restructuring is required is necessary in order to build the healthy, equitable, accessible system children and families need and deserve. As mentioned above, this should be done in partnership with the Mayor's ELEC, which should be reactivated as an advisory body that provides meaningful input on the city's early learning planning. Transparency and accountability through consistent, bi-directional communication with the ELEC, as well as the provider, stakeholder, and advocate communities allowing for feedback and collaborative planning should be a re-invigorated part and priority of the Administration. Lastly, the city should explore opportunities to create additional, flexible and more stable funding over time. For example, CDPH is leveraging Title V funding from the Illinois Department of Public Health and corporate funds to support the pilot. Moving forward, we know that federal, state and local investments will need to be maximized in order to expand and scale efforts if we are to achieve the comprehensive prenatal to three system, aligned with the broader early learning continuum of services, to produce the desired outcomes for Chicago's young children and families.

Name: Sana N. Jafri, Chicago Learning Exchange (CLX)

Committee: Education

In order to “ensure all students in Chicago Public Schools have access to the schools, teachers, and supports they need to succeed,” the Chicago Learning Exchange (CLX) recommends that a key strategic goal of the administration should be expanding and connecting high-quality out-of-school (OST) enrichment and workforce programming (i.e. also known as after-school and summer learning and work) for youth, educators, and our city to address a rapidly shifting world.ⁱ

Under this larger goal, this policy memo outlines a number of key objectives, strategies, and tactics to support Mayor Lightfoot’s vision of a world-class education for all Chicago youth, educators, and families to flourish.

Summary of Research

According to the University of Chicago’s Consortium on School Research, most policy efforts focus on in-school education achievement (i.e. test scores and/or college completion) as a major indicator of success.ⁱⁱ However, researchers, educators, parents, and employers agree: today’s students require academic prowess and a new set of soft and hard skills. These skills are often developed and nurtured in the out-of-school time space, where students spend most of their waking hours.ⁱⁱⁱ High-quality OST programs can produce academic gains, social and emotional skills, and provide new experiences and opportunities for youth.^{iv} OST also provides benefits for other stakeholders:

- For policy makers, OST can be leveraged as a powerful and nimble strategy to alleviate gaps in opportunity, student achievement, employment, and safety.
- For neighborhoods, OST spaces provide safety and can reduce juvenile violence as violence peaks after school hours.^v OST also has tangible benefits for working parents and guardians.^{vi}
- Additionally, OST organizations provide supports that impact public health, including reducing risky behaviors among youth (e.g. drug, alcohol and sexual activities).^{vii}

However, real inequities exist in OST. Historically, wealthier students have had greater access to enriching out-of-school experiences, compounding their privilege. Higher income families spend more than \$7,000-\$11,000 per child in out-of-school enrichment activities over historically marginalized families.^{viii} Furthermore, demand far outstrips supply for high-quality OST programs, especially among African-American and Hispanic parents.^{ix}

Recognizing the benefits of OST, past administrations, city agencies, foundations, individuals, and organizations have made investments and built a strong foundation of OST enrichment and summer work opportunities for Chicago youth. Current examples of effective programs include: CLX-led professional development and networking for OST educators; One Summer Chicago’s innovative approach to recognizing youth skills and opening up learning pathways through digital badging; After School Matters programming, and Chicago Public Library’s YOUmedia spaces. However, such opportunities are neither adequate to meet the need nor are they equitably distributed.

Realizing Mayor Lightfoot’s goal to ensure that all students have what they need to succeed requires: 1) greater investments in OST programs; 2) greater support and professional development of educators and organizations who work directly with youth; 3) connecting in-school and out-of-school time spaces as youth, parents, educators have a broader definition of success. This approach also provides an opportunity to meet the needs of the whole child.

Key Recommendation: Expand and connect high-quality out-of-school (OST) programming (i.e. also known as after-school and summer learning/work) for youth and our city to be prepared for rapidly shifting world.

Short-term (next 100 days):

- Review Chicago City of Learning (CCOL) Asset Maps of OST learning opportunities, Data Maps from Engaging Youth in a Connected World Report, and Chicago's LRNG digital badging platform to determine assets, gaps, participation in OST enrichment and skill building, including summer employment.
- Review existing literature and community-led input of Quality of Life Plans for high-priority neighborhoods that experience high levels of violence (e.g. Austin, Englewood, Roseland, etc.).
- Review other cities' efforts. The City of Los Angeles, which had similar issues with violence, implemented an explicit strategy to recruit and target youth into OST who might be recruited for gangs.^x
- Convene a meeting with OST stakeholders and explicitly lay out an agenda to expand and connect youth to high-quality out-of-school (OST) programs.

Long-term:

- Create a plan to raise awareness about existing opportunities and fill gaps in the learning ecosystem (i.e. the different spheres in a young person's life (i.e. school, after-school, and home)).
- Recognize learning achievements and skills built during OST through alternative credentials such as digital badges. Create learning pathways that link OST achievements to new skill-building opportunities.^{xi}
- Support efforts to train, network, and champion Chicago's OST educators to ensure that all youth are receiving high-quality OST experiences
- Galvanize funders, corporations, and universities to include in-school and out-of-school time support and research, especially for the South and West sides of Chicago.

Challenges:

- Data is key and critical. However, there has to be a balance. Past administrations and have focused efforts on creating "10,000" foot-view expensive data systems when in reality historically marginalized youth rely heavily on human connections that are provided by relationships with peers, educators, mentors, and family members.
- There has traditionally been a lack of focus in OST on the practitioners. Practitioners require support, recognition, and professional development to create meaningful, supportive, and skill-building experiences for young people and there is an opportunity to professionalize this role further.
- Despite a strong foundation of OST, past administrations have focused primarily on mentorship. If Chicago is to continue to be a world-class city, youth not only need supportive relationships, they also need skill development and recognition that will prepare them for the future of learning and work.
- Based on CCOL asset mapping, OST in Chicago's South and West side neighborhoods have a preponderance of sport and arts programming but lack STEM and civics programming.

ⁱ See Lori Lightfoot, *A Plan to Transform Chicago Public Schools*, available at https://lightfootforchicago.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2019_LEL_Education_Policy.pdf.

ⁱⁱ Jenny Nagaoka, Camille A. Farrington, Stacy B. Ehrlich, and Ryan D. Heathwith Et al. (2015). *Foundations for Young Adult Success*. University of Chicago Consortium on School Research. Available at <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Foundations-for-Young-Adult-Success.pdf>.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Influence of Home on School Success. (2004). Available at <https://www.naesp.org/sites/default/files/resources/2/Principal/2004/S-Op6.pdf>.

^{iv} See Afterschool Alliance. (2007). *Expanding Learning Opportunities: It Takes More than Time*. Available at https://www.afterschoolalliance.org/issue_briefs/issue_expand_learn_29.pdf.

^v Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Statistical Briefing Book. Available at <https://www.ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/offenders/qa03301.asp>.

^{vi} Jennifer McCombs, Anamarie Whitaker, and Paul Yoo. (2017). *The Value of Out-of-School Time Programs*. Rand Corporation. Available at <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/the-value-of-out-of-school-time-programs.aspx>.

^{vii} Ibid.

^{viii} Chicago Learning Exchange Literature Review. (2018). Available at <https://chicagolx.org/resources/clx-review-of-literature-research-foundations-for-the-chicago-learning-exchange>.

^{ix} Afterschool Programs in Demand. (2014). Available at http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM-2014/AA3PM_Key_Findings.pdf.

^x Attorney General Kwame Raoul and Arne Duncan. (2019). Mayor-Elect *Lightfoot Has a Blueprint for Dramatically Reducing Gun Violence: Look to Our Peer Cities*. Available at https://www.investchi.org/mayor-elect_lightfoot_has_a_blueprint_for_dramatically_reducing_gun_violence_look_to_our_peer_cities.

^{xi} Jeanne Century, Kaitlyn Ferris, Elizabeth Noble, E., and Sarah Wille. (2018). *Engaging youth in a Connected World: The Promise of Digital Media Tools and Technologies in Chicago's Out-of-School Time Programs*. University of Chicago STEM Education Outlier Research & Evaluation. Available at <https://chicagolx.org/resources/engaging-youth-in-a-connected-world>.

As the founding dean of Loyola University's Arrupe College, a two year college for first generation, Pell eligible students who are often underrepresented at private higher ed institutions, I will focus my remarks on postsecondary education in Chicago. Informing my remarks is the recent op ed by Tiffany Jones in the New York Times:

<https://nyti.ms/2Fa1hiM>

The author represents my experience: “free tuition” without addressing nontuition expenses is indeed a “cruel irony.”

Consequently, I recommend the following, to be implemented through a series of pilot programs during the course of Mayor Lightfoot’s first term:

- 1) Decreasing the load of academic advisors in City Colleges. Currently, in Chicago and other major cities, many students meet with their advisor once during enrollment—hardly sufficient for first gen students whose parents are unable to navigate their academic programs and who balance commuting, work, and family obligations with studying;
- 2) Providing a robust, thorough orientation prior to enrollment at City Colleges—research demonstrates that if a student meets with her/his advisor, registers for classes, meets other students, and learns where the financial aid office and other resources are located prior to the first day of classes, retention increases;
- 3) Normalizing resource seeking behaviors and responding with adequate resources—despite the more than 20% increase in mental health related inquiries and requests on campuses since 2008 (American Council of Education, 2018), first gen students often feel stigmatized for pursuing these and other supports. Social workers and other mental health professionals, preferably of color, are needed to support students. Similarly, tutoring and mentoring provided by peers of color are necessary to improve retention and completion. Programs addressing food insecurities are needed and can perhaps provide a way of building community if all students have access to meals before, in between, or after classes;
- 4) Providing more access to affordable housing to students under the age of 21—there is a paucity of housing opportunities for traditional college age students in Chicago; in my four plus years at Arrupe, Mercy Home seems to be the only option other than the city shelters;
- 5) Supporting young parents by offering affordable childcare options—the Noble network offers childcare for the children of their students and their faculty/staff; perhaps this can be a model for City College campuses

Funding from foundations is available for items 2 and 3.

Piloting programs addressing the nontuition expenses listed above during Mayor

Lightfoot's term of office accompanied by measuring and assessing outcomes of the pilot programs is necessary. If not, Chicago may experience increases in high school graduation rates, but its two year graduation rates from its city colleges will continue to mirror those of the rest of the U.S.—at 5%.

Steve Katsouros, SJ
Dean and Executive Director
Arrupe College
Loyola University Chicago

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot
From: Sybil Madison, Ph.D.

Targeted Objectives:

- To close the opportunity gap for Chicago's children, accelerating the path to an equitable world-class system of public schools

Initiative: Maximize the use of the city's rich learning assets to support the interest-driven engagement of youth in out-of-school opportunities and their development of pathways to college and career.

Preamble:

As the director of Chicago City of Learning initiative for the past 6 years, I know that the informal learning ecosystem in this city is abundant enough for **every child in this city** to:

- explore numerous interests,
- develop their talents and passions, and
- build the kinds of relationships and skill sets that will facilitate their paths to futures *of their choosing*.

What Chicago lacks is a **comprehensive and networked approach** to making those opportunities both visible and accessible, the **political and social commitment** to ensuring that every young person is connected to opportunity, and the **investment in and support** for a multi-sector network of youth-serving organizations to connect their opportunities into pathways that youth can pursue. When we fail to make opportunities and pathways visible, we contribute to **systemic inequity** by advantaging those whose resources and social networks enable them to discover, chart, and create pathways to success for their children.

The Idea:

I propose that we keep Mayor Emanuel's Chicago City of Learning initiative and reimagine it as an unapologetically student-centered and city-wide effort to "Connect All Youth" to out-of-school opportunities that nurture their interests, enrich their school-based learning, and support their own, and their families', understanding of possible future identities and paths – paths that lead them to college and career. Committing to connecting all youth to Chicago's rich resources and opportunities requires a multi-pronged effort that takes place across school, community, and household spaces.

We must organize, network, and connect agencies, organizations, businesses, and other entities that offer opportunities for youth to engage in interest-based learning and/or work-based experiences. If we all come to the table, we will find that there are natural pathways of engagement that can take a young person from fleeting interest, to deep investment, to

internship/apprenticeship, and on to college and/or career. I would suggest that this includes raising our expectations of medium and large businesses that have the resources to create well-supported workplace-based experiences for high school and early college students (City Colleges of Chicago is working on this model).

We must ensure that these opportunities and pathways are **equitably** available and engaged in across the city by all youth. This means situating the support for interest-driven learning in our public schools. Schools can support families, and youth directly, in exploring and getting connected to the opportunities outside of their own four walls. If we did so, then every summer, with every youth connected to interest-powered pursuits, we can ensure that more of our youth are building relationships with positive peers and adults and are in contexts that are emotionally and physically safe. Furthermore, our schools can begin to understand how these experiences outside of school contribute to the development of competencies that can be recognized inside of schools (a la the state-wide exploration of competency-based learning - <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/CompetencyPilot.aspx>).

Finally, we must ensure that as we learn more about the opportunities available that we address inequities across communities in availability of those opportunities, access to those opportunities, and participation in those opportunities. Communities can and should be engaged in assessing and redesigning the learning opportunities available to their children. And the city also should ensure that diverse opportunities are all across Chicago, while also ensuring that youth can access opportunities wherever they may be by addressing issues like reduced-fare transportation and the barriers that cost creates for youth when seeking to engage in many of our cultural offerings.

First 100 Days:

In the first 100 Days, we need to rally the youth-serving community as we approach Summer 2019. We need to include them in the visioning of what it looks like to organize and network opportunities around youth. We also need to design a process by which we can better understand what opportunities youth want, community by community. And we need to partner with the caring adults – family members and educators – who mediate youth access to opportunity to understand the barriers that they face in helping youth make those connections. Finally, we need to think about what the ask to the business community should be, as they can play a significant role in providing youth with experiences that support their pathways to college and career.

Long-term Implementation and Anticipated Challenges

I believe that the broad youth-serving community in Chicago can aim to ensure that every young person, from 3rd through 12th grade is connected to opportunities to explore their interests and develop their talents during Summer 2020. The challenges with these efforts concern investment in the time and resources it takes to do that networking, sustaining the momentum among a group that is very busy and often under-resourced, and developing a city-wide strategy that operates community by community. Fortunately, my experience has been that we all understand that all of these youth are ours and that we serve them best by facilitating their engagement across all of the opportunities that we have to offer.

To: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot
From: Sybil Madison, Ph.D.

Targeted Objectives:

- Ensure all students have access to the quality early childhood experiences they need to enter kindergarten ready to learn;
- Ensure that all students have access to ... the supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success;
- Ensure that all students have access to quality post-secondary options.

Initiative: Community-based hubs designed to support PreK-16 development and learning proactively by coordinating and networking resources at a local (and hyper-local) level.

Preamble:

As a community psychologist, my worldview is based in the beliefs that:

- human beings have an innate desire to thrive,
- individuals, families, and communities are resilient, and
- our ecosystems have what is needed to sustain us - we just need to make use of those resources efficiently and creatively

I believe that the poor outcomes that we see at community, family, and individual levels often reflect a broad systemic failure to support health and well-being in proactive and coordinated ways. Right now, we have an opportunity to reinvest in the communities, families, and youth who have been on the receiving end of, at worst, intentional disinvestment, and, at best, fractured, uncoordinated, and under-resourced efforts to address unacceptable disparities in outcomes in achievement, as well as other critical areas.

The Idea:

I propose that Community Hubs are created at which a range of proactive supports and services for PreK-12 can be provided, with specific focus on the PreK and 12-16 ends of the spectrum. These hubs would be designated to serve specific neighborhoods/communities and would be located spaces that are broadly accessible and considered "safe". Community Hubs could be at sites that already have a lot of traction with local residents and specifically parents and youth (e.g. a high school with space, a community center, a park, etc.) or they could be established in re-purposed spaces, like a closed school building.

Community Hubs would provide specific supports and services, with attention to avoiding duplication. Some of these supports exist already, but are dispersed; while other supports would need to be developed. Using an asset-based community development approach,

each Community Hub would be created with input from the community and based on an assessment of local assets and needs.

The kinds of supports and services likely to be housed at a Community Hub include, but are not limited to:

- A volunteer-powered infant visiting program that enables lay people to embrace and support new parents
- Early childhood screening that enables developmental concerns to be identified and addressed early ([currently funded by the state](#))
- Comprehensive preschool information that enables parents to identify the option that is appropriate for their child(ren) and family
 - This information would include local home-based preschool options, the state- and city-funded preschool programs, and the tuition-based (private) programs
- Centralized information about local public school options and open houses
- Centralized information about local college options, city-wide internships and jobs
- Workforce development training, with information and entry points for pathways to internships, apprenticeships, and certifications
- Co-work location for community groups

In cases where these services are already provided (e.g. early childhood screening), the goal would be to co-locate those providers at the hub, so that services are brought to the community, rather than the community having to find and travel to disparate services. These hubs could have additional offerings (e.g. information for senior citizens, groups for caretakers, etc.), but this memo is limited to addressing education-related needs.

First 100 Days:

In the first 100 Days, priority communities should be identified. In the spirit of **equity** and providing the resources needed to reach ideal outcomes, priority should be given to under-resourced neighborhoods (Community Hubs would not be created in all areas of the city). These communities are likely to also be identified for other efforts and initiatives; and if so, all community-based efforts should be connected. The process by which these communities are determined should be **transparent**.

Long-term Implementation and Anticipated Challenges

Community needs should be identified through a grassroots, asset-based engagement and assessment process that is reflective of the **diversity** of the community. Youth can be employed to help with asset mapping and community surveys. Information and data from "Quality of Life" planning processes, city agencies, etc. also can be leveraged to determine the breadth and depth of supports and services needed.

As the identified communities are likely to be the focus of other initiatives (e.g. public safety), it will be important to integrate all initiatives. Anticipated challenges include push back against providing specific communities with additional resources, "turf wars" among long-standing community-based programs and organizations that may feel threatened by efforts to coordinate, and unified cooperation and support from aldermen in community areas that have 2 or more aldermen.

Name: Sylvia Puente, Latino Policy Forum, many of these recommendations is from a memo previously submitted to CPS by the former CPS Latino Advisory Committee, particularly Jose Rico

Transition Committee: Education

Date: April 14, 2019

Initiative: Ensuring all students have access to the quality school, teachers, and supports they need to graduate from high school on the path to success. Specifically, this memo addresses how to promote equity among school professionals at every level of the education pipeline: quality early education teachers, racial equity among teachers, administrators, principals, network chiefs, and other CPS leadership, as well as bilingual teachers and educators.

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative. There is an increasing body of research that indicates that student performance and educational outcomes are enhanced and strengthened when they have teachers who are of their same race/ethnicity. It is also critical to ensure that there are sufficient bilingual educators to deliver culturally and linguistically responsive instruction across a range of languages. Research is clear that bilingual teachers have the specialized knowledge and skills for quality instruction, have an enhanced capacity to build home-school connections, can formally assess and modify instruction, and can better motivate EL students.

As indicated in the chart below, there is a significant underrepresentation of African American and Latino teachers, as well as Latino principals. Additionally, bilingual students are 18.7% of current CPS students. While the number of bilingual educators is not reported, there is a known shortage of bilingual teachers, including in the area of early education.

CPS DEMOGRAPHIC DATA AND TEACHER/PRINCIPAL SHORTAGE BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	% students	% teachers	% principals	% teachers over/under represented (C3-C2)	% principals over/under represented (C4-2)	Approx. number of teachers Over/under represented	Approx. number of principals /Over/under represented
African American	36.6	21.1	43.8	-15.5	+7.2	-3239	+37
Latino	46.7	21.0	16.2	-25.7	-30.5	-5371	-156
White	10.5	50.3	35.0	+39.8	+24.5	+8317	+125
Asian	4.1	3.7	0.8	-0.4	-3.3	84	4
Other	2.0	3.8	4.3	+1.6	+2.1	376	12
Total	361,314	20,898	512				

Note: numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Source: Columns 1 through 4 from CPS.edu/About_CPS/At-a-glance/Pages/Stats_and_facts.aspx. Columns 5 through 8, analysis conducted by Latino Policy Forum

What is happening today that we need to keep?

- Maintain Chicago City College scholarship program to increase the number early education teachers.

- Formalize and invest in current volunteer initiative by current/retired principals to coach and mentor Latino principal candidates.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days?

- As Mayor Lightfoot makes appointments ensure that CPS network chiefs, top leadership positions, and board members reflect diversity of CPS student population.
- Establish a taskforce to develop a plan and recommendations to address the underrepresentation of educators of color at all levels of the education pipeline e.g. African American teachers, Latinos principals, network chiefs, high level administrators and bilingual educators. It could include:
 - Plan, develop and set targets for an educator hiring, retention and leadership initiative that leverages public and private resources, hiring an additional 2,000 teach of color per year
 - Develop and implement a plan for a principal leadership institute
 - Remedy bilingual educator shortage and ensure compliance with bilingual preschool statute
- Support current legislative proposals to: 1) eliminate the TAP as a requisite for entry in the teaching profession, and 2) expand the pool of bilingual educators.

What we can plan for longer term implementation?

- Set targets for CPS educator hiring to address shortage of teachers of color.
- Expand and leverage public and private resources to increase educators of color in CPS.
- Expand partnership with existing programs such as Golden Apple Foundation, Grow your Own, Urban Education Leadership Program
- Create partnership with universities for professional development and to increase educator pipeline
- Develop and implement early recruitment programs among high school and community college students

What challenges we might encounter in executing this initiative? There are many factors that impact who is hired in CPS and clearly seniority, tenure, union and all legal processes must be adhered to in the implementation of personnel decisions. However, obtaining equity, diversity and inclusion is not likely to occur unless there are targeted effort to remedy the under representation of the estimated 3,239 African American teachers, 5,371 Latino teachers, and 156 Latino principals.



Dr. Sonia Soltero, DePaul University
Education Transition Committee
April 15, 2019

Mayor-Elect Lightfoot Education Objective: “Ensure all students in CPS have access to the schools, teachers and supports they need to succeed.”

Potential Initiative: Revisioning bilingual education as an education equalizer for English Learners and all CPS students, as a path toward biliterate and multicultural competences, and to position the City of Chicago as a national and international leader in bilingual education excellence.

One in three CPS students is a current or former English Learner (i.e. student not yet proficient in English). Currently, close to 65,000 CPS students are English Learners, of which nearly 84% are Spanish-speakers, followed by 2.3% Arabic, 1.3% each Urdu and Cantonese, and 1.1% Polish. English Learners suffer a higher risk for poor academic performance than their English-speaking peers. Not only must they acquire an additional language while learning academic content, but they must also navigate a particularly unwelcoming anti-immigrant political climate that often results in harmful and long-lasting psychological tolls. While CPS has made gains in addressing the educational needs of the mostly low-income children and youth of color whose native language is not English, the former top leadership (City and District levels) have fallen short in making the education of this population a system-wide priority. The following areas represent the most urgent challenges that Mayor Lightfoot and her education team must address:

- Disproportionality of Executive Cabinet and senior leadership positions not reflective of the CPS student demographic, in particular the dearth of Latinos in top leadership positions.
- Inadequate number of District/Network/School leaders knowledgeable about bilingual education, the complexities of second language acquisition, and English Learner education.
- Pervasive shortage of bilingual education teachers and District/Network/School leaders, which to date has not been fully recognized as an urgent priority.
- Significant gaps in systemwide compliance with federal and state laws to provide bilingual education services in schools that have twenty or more students from the same language group.
- Broad inconsistencies in school-level understanding of how to provide state-mandated bilingual education English as a Second Language (ESL) programs and services.
- Significant variance in the quality of bilingual education and ESL programs driven by individual school principals' preferences rather than by district-wide accountability systems.
- Lack of a formalized, impartial, and reliable auditing system for bilingual education and ESL programs and inadequate school-level follow-up to enact necessary changes.
- Existing policies for decision-making about selective enrollment schools, grade promotion/retention, teacher evaluations, and school ratings based on English-only accountability assessment measures that create inequity and exclusionary practices.

Mayor Lightfoot has an unprecedented opportunity to infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, transformation, diversity and inclusion in remedying these chronic dilemmas. Through the measures detailed below, Mayor Lightfoot's legacy will mark a decisive shift in creating the necessary conditions for the City's English Learners to thrive academically and be afforded equity in access along with the educational opportunities they deserve.

What is in place that needs to be kept: Integral to remedying the many chronic problems in addressing the academic, language, and socio-emotional needs of linguistically diverse students, it is imperative that the CPS Office of Language and Cultural Education continue to be a stand-alone office headed by a Chief Officer who is part of the CPS Executive Cabinet. Additionally, the CPS Seal of Biliteracy program for graduating seniors and Pathways Programs, which awards biliteracy recognitions to 5th and 8th graders, should continue and grow. CPS also should continue to support and invest in its existing dual language programs, and create adequately funded structures for sustainability and expansion.

What to implement in the next 100 days: Create a task force that includes a cross-section of experts (bilingual teachers, principals, Network Chiefs, Office of Language and Culture staff, Bilingual Parent Advisory Council members, and other specialists in the field) to examine the current state of bilingual education and ESL services, and provide recommendations to implement in the next four years. Partner with the Council of Great City Schools to draft a strategic plan for the improvement and expansion of bilingual education and dual language education. Create a Mayoral Special Advisor on Bilingual Education position (who is well versed on and has experience in bilingual education), to serve under the newly appointed Deputy Chief of Staff for Education. Establish a mandatory session at the Annual CPS Legal Conference for Administrators dedicated to English Learners (in line with the current mandatory sessions for Special Education, Health and Safety, etc).

What to plan for longer-term implementation:

Leadership: Increase the number of Executive Cabinet and senior leadership positions to reflect current CPS student demographics that now account for 47% Latino students and more evenly balance the ethnic/racial makeup. Increase the number of District/Network/School leaders with relevant credentials, expertise, and experience in bilingual education.

Workforce: Prioritize the recruitment, hiring, and retention of credentialed bilingual education teachers as well as District/Network/School leaders by working more closely with the Talent Office, creating pathways for high school graduates with the Seal of Biliteracy to become bilingual teachers, and expanding cohort CPS-funded opportunities. Increase the number of Network and District staff to support and oversee federal/state law compliance to provide high quality bilingual education programs. Add District-committed funding to support schools in hiring qualified bilingual teachers and alleviate the additional cost shouldered by school-level budgets, putting this on par with special education staff funding policies.

Implementation: Establish accountability systems that incorporate existing audit ratings to ensure students receive a high quality bilingual education and implement school-level follow-up to enact necessary changes. Mandate professional development for all school leaders to increase understanding on how to design and implement state-mandated bilingual education programs and services. Increase District/School funded access to instructional materials that are in students' native languages. Enhance existing English Learner parent involvement programs and language support systems. Review and modify policies that are inclusive of English Learners and consider native language assessments in decisions concerning selective enrollment processes, grade promotion/retention, teacher evaluations, and school ratings.

Challenges in executing this initiative: The will to break from deep-rooted inequities in the education of historically subjugated English Learners through equitable funding reallocation and commitment to increasing leadership and workforce with relevant expertise that reflects the current ethnic/racial demographics of the CPS student population.

YOUTH CONNECTION CHARTER SCHOOL

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Youth Connection Charter School is to advocate, develop, and provide world-class education to high school dropouts in partnership with the alternative high school community.

***Not Just a Second Chance...
 But a BETTER Chance***

Name: Sheila Venson

Transition Committee: Education

A potential initiative (one sentence)

Mobilize an assembly of constituents (educators, parents, students, social service providers, advocates, business people, and legislators) to act on improving the educational and employment outcomes and options for high-risk youth* from low income neighborhoods toward the goal of leveraging and coordinating existing resources/programs to support high-risk youth along a continuum of high school completion, workforce training/college enrollment and completion, and entry into the workforce.

This initiative is based on the premise *that if we create intentional pathways to the middle class for the most vulnerable youth in our communities through strategic educational and training supports then we will not only reduce violence and incarceration rates in neighborhoods, but we will also see generational improvement in living standards in these communities.* This proposed initiative addresses the Mayor Elect's objective of increasing post-secondary success so all who wants to can live in and thrive in Chicago.

*High-risk youth is defined as young people with 3-4 barriers to completing their high school education, e.g., court involvement, gang involved, parenting or pregnant, in need of special education services, in need of mental health services, dropped out of school, highly mobile, etc.

How the new administration can infuse the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative

Targeting the most vulnerable is an equity issue. Young people from Chicago's poorest neighborhoods who are at-risk and disconnected from the education system are often part of families that are experiencing generational poverty. Increasing employment rates remains central to breaking the cycle of poverty, with educational obtainment being an essential determinant of employment at middle class incomes. The values of transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation in this initiative can be achieved through engaging stakeholders who are closest to the issue (s), establishing clear and measurable objectives that are used to solve problems that result in a transformational change.

What is happening today that we need to keep

Chicago has a variety of programs addressing the needs of high-risk youth. These include alternative schools for dropouts, CPS Option Schools, youth employment programs under WIOA, public and private youth serving social service agencies that address a myriad of issues ranging from mental health services to juvenile justice reentry programs, to after-school programs, as well as, Chicago City College programs that offer GED and workforce training programs. While these options and opportunities are available for at-risk youth and probably making an impact in their lives, a more impactive approach would be to strategically coordinate these services, efforts, and practices to address the youth' social, emotional, and academic barriers along the continuum of reengagement, high school completion, early work experience, and post-secondary education/training.

Name: Sheila Venson

Transition Committee: Education

Memo – Page 2

What we need to implement in the next 100 days

In the next 100 days, the city could compile a list of youth serving agencies that have a focus and programming around high-risk youth. Most programs serving high-risk youth are grassroots and community-based, while the city and the state funds programs for select demographic populations (DCFS wards of the state, unemployed youth, homeless youth, court involved youth, etc.). The city could work with a cross section of city and state agencies to identify the resources and funding targeted at this population of youth.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation

The city could convene a working group or taskforce of stakeholders to implement the goal of supporting 50,000 (as an example) at-risk and high-risk youth along a continuum of high school completion, workforce training/college enrollment/completion, and entry in to the workforce and/or engaging in entrepreneurship over the next ten years. Implementation might include:

- Target the most vulnerable youth from Chicago poorest neighborhoods
- Partner with a core group of community schools and social service organizations to deliver academic, social, and post-secondary transition supports.
- Address barriers to school reengagement (transportation, child care, housing, mental health, etc.)
- Provide persistent outreach and follow up for youth who are resistant to reengagement or who drop out of school
- Create multiple pathways to high school graduation that are intentionally designed to connect education and learning to individual student career interests, aptitudes, and post-secondary transitions.
- Provide opportunities for youth to earn college credit and/or workforce certificates as a part of their high school academic program
- Strategically coordinate the services, efforts, and practices of youth development agencies to address youth' social, emotional, and academic barriers along the continuum of reengagement, high school completion, early work experience, post-secondary education/training.
- Use individual participant data to drive the mix of strategies, options, and services
- Support traumatized students with evidence-based interventions, youth development, grief and bereavement, counseling, mental health and substance abuse, and violence prevention.
- Provide multiple year career enrichment activities that include paid internships and opportunities for youth to build relationships with industry professionals.
- Provided multiple year mentoring and support services designed to keep students moving along a career pathway
- Involve the corporate and public sectors as essential partners

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative

Working across agencies to remove barriers to collaboration between systems and programs can be a challenge but one that can be overcome.



Transition Memo to Lightfoot Team

Name:	Theresa Hawley, Senior VP for Policy & Innovation
Transition Committee:	Education
Prompt:	Ensure all young children have access to the quality early childhood experiences needed to enter Kindergarten ready to thrive.
Initiative:	Successfully implement the re-competition of Head Start, Early Head Start, Preschool for All and Prevention Initiative funds to Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) serving children 0-5 throughout the city.

Infusing the values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation: The re-competition of early childhood funding that is currently underway through the City's Department of Family Support Services (DFSS) has the power to transform early education programs throughout the city. Done well, this process will be transparent, increase the accountability of early learning providers to meet quality standards that research shows are needed to support children's healthy growth and development, and will increase equitable access to high quality early learning services, especially for "priority populations" (defined by the Illinois Early Learning Council as homeless children; children of teen parents; children in the state's Department of Children & Family Services system, including children in foster care; children with disabilities; children in poverty and deep poverty; and children whose families are linguistically-isolated).

What is happening today that we need to keep: The recently released Request for Proposals has many features that are critical for successful implementation, including:

- Substantially raised reimbursement rates for Head Start and Early Head Start, allowing programs to serve families who are not eligible for Child Care Assistance
- Required minimum salaries for staff that are not tied to funding stream but rather to staff qualifications
- Requirements that all programs meet the Chicago Early Learning Standards, which are comprehensive and support high quality

The current plan to invest an additional \$50 million of Head Start/Early Head Start and state Early Childhood Block Grant funding in CBO-provided early learning is essential to maintain, as is the city's and CPS's local investment in the early childhood system.

What we need to implement in the next 100 days: The responses to the RFP will be submitted by May 15. Review of submitted proposals and decisions about awards will be among the first actions of the new administration. It is critical that these principles drive the selection process:

- Focus on serving priority populations, especially under age four, and hold programs accountable for recruiting and serving these families. With CPS no longer serving three year olds, CBOs need to dramatically increase their services for three year olds in poverty; continued growth in services for infants and toddlers is also greatly needed.
- Ensure that programs have enough resources to provide quality programs to the children and families they plan to serve, taking into account the role of Child Care Assistance and the likely impacts of the rising minimum wage on eligibility patterns for all of the early childhood funding streams.
- Establish clear accountability for programs to increase staff compensation, meet comprehensive program standards, and implement high quality teaching practices.

- Ensure children and families in need in every part of the city have access to services, and that there are not disparities in access by race, ethnicity, and language spoken in the home

To date, inconsistent communication with stakeholders has led to growing concerns about whether programs will be provided with sufficient resources to maintain and grow their programs. Clear communication to providers about the intention of the City to strengthen and grow CBOs—while also implementing universal pre-k—is essential, as is transparency about how funding decisions are made. And quick action on funding decisions is paramount, as programs need to know what funding they will have as they plan for and begin a new school year.

What we can plan for longer-term implementation: As the City continues its implementation of Universal Pre-K, it must continue to grow services for children ages birth through three. The City should continue to devote local resources to growing a strong early childhood system, and should continue to provide technical assistance and professional development to providers to ensure effective program implementation.

When the City consolidated Early Childhood Block Grant and Head Start/Early Head Start funding for CBOs into DFSS, it created the opportunity to more holistically plan for and finance early learning services in the City. Unfortunately, the current structure of the RFP does not fully capitalize on that opportunity, but rather perpetuates a system of siloed funding. For example, providers will receive the same amount per child for Preschool for All regardless of whether they are also receiving Head Start and/or Child Care Assistance funds for that same child. This makes little sense given that, with the new Chicago Early Learning Standards, the services to be provided (and thus, the cost of providing the services) vary little based on the funding streams for which an individual child is eligible. The proposed funding structure outlined in the RFP has the potential to lead to very significant variation in funding levels for essentially the same services, creating unintended and counter-productive incentives for programs to serve only those children who will help them maximize resources, especially given that providers are allowed to take a profit from providing child care services. The City should work to refine its approach to funding programs to ensure that programs have enough resources to provide quality services, and that there is transparency into how ALL public funding streams (including Child Care Assistance) and parent fees/co-pays (where applicable) are being used to support early childhood programming.

What challenges we might encounter in executing on this initiative: The shift that is being asked of community-based early childhood providers in Chicago is very significant—at the preschool-age level, they are asked to move from serving 3 & 4 year old children primarily from working families to serving primarily 3 year olds but without regard to the working status (and thus, CCAP eligibility) of the family. They are also being asked to expand services for infants and toddlers, which is expensive and entails cumbersome facilities requirements. They are being asked to increase their quality even while they face unprecedented workforce shortages and increased competition for staff from both the public school system and, given the now higher minimum wage and the growing “gig economy”, a wide range of other employers that may offer easier work for similar pay. Nevertheless, supporting the successful participation of CBOs in the growth of the early learning system in Chicago is essential to ensuring families and children are able to access the quality services they need.



Advancing the human and civil rights of people with disabilities

SELF-ADVOCACY ASSISTANCE ★ LEGAL SERVICES ★ DISABILITY RIGHTS EDUCATION ★ PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCACY ★ ABUSE INVESTIGATIONS

April 17, 2019

TO: Mayor-Elect Lori Lightfoot

FROM: Zena Naiditch, President & CEO of Equip for Equality

OBJECTIVE: Increase postsecondary success so all who want to can live and thrive in Chicago.

Potential Initiative: Improve and expand upon the provision of transition services to students with disabilities to better prepare them to participate in post-secondary opportunities.

(a) What is happening today that you need to keep:

As more businesses focus on hiring diverse employees, people with disabilities have employment opportunities that have not previously existed. Some form of postsecondary education is often necessary in order to access these employment opportunities. Chicago Public Schools (“CPS”) has begun to focus on creating more robust transition and vocational programs for students with disabilities (often 18-22 year-olds) that will provide them with the supports they need to achieve independent living, competitive employment, and postsecondary education upon aging out of special education services the day before their 22nd birthday.

CPS has a number of transition programs throughout the city that provide opportunities for older students with disabilities to get real world experience that will help prepare them for life after high school. This Administration should continue to focus on strengthening and expanding these programs to ensure access to students with a range of disabilities throughout Chicago. Currently the programs focus on students with intellectual disabilities and there are not enough of the programs throughout the city, so expanding the type and number of transition programs is critical.

(b) What you need to implement in the next 100 days:

This Administration should focus on expanding access to these transition programs for students with a broader range of disabilities, with a specific focus on developing partnerships with community colleges. Partnerships with community colleges will allow 18-22 year-olds with disabilities to develop the skills they need to be prepared for postsecondary education while still receiving special education services from CPS.

THE INDEPENDENT, FEDERALLY MANDATED PROTECTION & ADVOCACY SYSTEM FOR THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

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Parent groups at individual transition focused schools have begun exploring partnerships with the City Colleges of Chicago, and at least one school may have already developed an initial partnership with one community college, so it is realistic to attempt to establish other partnerships within the next 100 days. It is critical to offer this type of experience to all students with disabilities who are receiving transition services from CPS and are interested in exploring community college courses. These students may not be prepared to attend college yet on their own, but with the support of their special education teachers, they can begin to experience college while still receiving transition services from CPS. This Administration should prioritize the development of partnerships with community colleges for all students with disabilities.

(c) What you can plan for longer term implementation:

While CPS has transition programs for students who have typically completed their four traditional years of high school, this Administration should prioritize over the long-term development of research-based and comprehensive transition services for students who are 14.5 and older who are still in their traditional four years of high school. Currently, CPS offers minimal transition supports to these students. CPS is required by federal and state law to develop transition plans for students 14.5 and older, but transition planning is often an afterthought.

This Administration should review best practices to determine what states are providing effective transition planning for students who are still in high school. Specifically, Washington D.C. and New Hampshire have developed promising transition toolkits to facilitate effective transition planning. This Administration could begin a pilot program at a select number of high schools to determine if the provision of more intensive and specific transition services leads to higher rates of success in postsecondary education.

(d) What challenges you might encounter in executing this initiative:

Executing this initiative will be challenging due to the shortage of special education teachers in Illinois. Additionally, many teachers lack training on the type of transition services that a student with a disability requires in order to be prepared to participate in post-secondary opportunities upon graduating from CPS or aging out of special education services at age 22.

By focusing on this initiative, the Administration will be following its stated values of equity, transparency, accountability, diversity and inclusion, and transformation. Specifically, the Administration will be increasing equity and diversity and inclusion by ensuring that students with disabilities have access to the services they need in school in order to be successful in adult life.